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THE LURE OF ENGLISH CATHEDRALS

(NORTHERN)

BY

FRANCES M. GOSTLING

OFFICIER D'ACADÉMIE FRANÇAISE

AUTHOR OF

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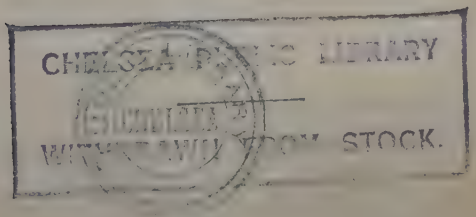

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PREFACE

In reading the history of the more ancient of our Northern Cathedrals one cannot but be struck with the severe struggle for existence which Christianity must have undergone during the first few centuries after its introduction into Britain. At first sight, perhaps, the great and magnificent buildings we are about to visit will make us forget the humble oratories of wood and stone, hastily raised over some sacred well, or the site of a heathen temple, to serve as a baptistery for the handful of Christians converted by one of the first missionaries. But as in memory we wander back through the centuries, we shall find that each proud York or Lichfield has had some such beginning. We shall find, too, that though the primitive story of these religious centres is of no earlier date than that of the corresponding cathedrals of the south, its detail is ruder, more archaic. These northern churchmen stand out as heroes, or supermen, among a laity who have scarcely emerged from pagan barbarism. We find missions established, flourishing for a time, and then, with the death of a lately converted king or chief, wiped out almost as though they had never existed.

But in the south it was not so. Augustine of

Canterbury, Wilfrid of Selsea, Birinus of Winchester arrived, and the See never looked back. The Church in the north had far more to contend with. There were its wild neighbours, the Picts and Scots, continually raiding the country, destroying religious buildings, murdering monks and nuns; and the still more savage Danes, Angles, and other Teuton pirates attacking from the east. What enthusiasm must have inspired the clergy who ventured back to such ruined outposts of the New Faith as Peterborough, York, or Lindisfarne! I think it is necessary to realize this difference between north and south, because we find history in the former more dependent on tradition than in the more civilized portion of our island. Stories which I shall relate may seem grotesque, fabulous, even perhaps irreverent. But it is the grotesqueness of a child, the unconscious irreverence of the youth of the race. In these days of our old age, when truth is hardly recognized for truth unless it has been divorced from poetry, and reduced to the formality of a printed document, such stories are too often regarded as worthless. But surely it is in them that we find recorded most of the treasures of past ages, and certainly it is to tradition we must often turn to ascertain something of the early days of our Cathedrals.

And then they are so beautiful, these old stories, which have charmed the childhood of our race, and in many cases our own childhood. And surely, too, they are instructive, bringing

back to us the manner of life and the characters of our early fathers. There are the stories of Saint Cuthbert and his communings with the angels, of the faithful Ovin and the angelic songs he was permitted to hear, of Saint Chad and his white doe who brought him his daily milk, of the defence of her City of Chester by the grateful Werburgh. We should know little or nothing of those days save for the poets who have handed them down to us. Therefore I give my story as I find it without apology. It has been gathered from many sources, much from that greatest of chroniclers, Beda, the Monk of Jarrow. If I have succeeded in making my readers appreciate the beauty of character and holiness of life of some of these many heroes of the Church, I feel that I shall not have written this little book in vain.

FRANCES M. GOSTLING

BARNINGHAM
SLINDON, 1925

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THE LURE OF ENGLISH CATHEDRALS

I

ELY

The Northern Cathedrals of England, what a subject! Ely, Peterborough, Lincoln, York, Ripon, Durham, Chester, Lichfield, each with its history, its legends, its crowds of ghosts who follow one about from tomb to tomb, trying to make themselves articulate, that we may recall them to life in our pages, and gain for them some of the sympathy and understanding they lacked when in this world. There are kings, queens, bishops, abbots, monks, nuns: many saints there are among them, and, alas, sinners. All go to make up the story of our cathedrals and minsters. At Ely, for instance, we shall meet Saint Audrey, the stately royal abbess, and her sister Sexburga, holding their phantom court behind the high altar. A strange, isolated place this Isle of Ely still is, in spite of railways and motor cars. What must it have been like in the days when the beautiful daughter of Anna, King of East Anglia, founded her monastery?

We had left our Sussex home that morning, and driven, not by old Stane Street, as the Romans would have done, but by those beech avenues and hawthorn-bordered lanes which wind about below the forest-covered shoulders of our Southern Downs. How beautiful it was that May morning! The hawthorns were in flower, and the laburnums, the meadows paved with golden buttercups. Truly it was the youth of the year, for larks were singing, and birds mating, and little calves, lambs, and foals frisking about in the fields. Even our dear shabby old car Elizabeth seemed to feel the intoxicating joy of the morning, and flew up and down hill as though she had been a swallow, rather than a staid, middle-aged, black-robed Ford.

It was not long before we reached Petworth, and that beautiful country beyond, where the trees grow in such abundance, and goats feed peacefully among the gorse of the roadside. Here, away to the left, on a crest above Haslemere, lies Aldworth, once the home of Lord Tennyson. And so through North Chapel we sped onward to Ram's Nest, and entered the region of the rhododendron and azalea, to find the land glowing with flowers of every hue.

Between Guildford and Windsor we lunched beside the road, as is our gipsy custom, and afterwards drove through the great park, with memories of Herne the Hunter, and kings and queens innumerable, to the town itself, with its crowded High Street, and noticed the flag flying

on the Round Tower, and so down the hill into Eton.

After Eton I think I must have got a little sleepy, but I have hazy recollections of Beaconsfield, Amersham, Luton, and other places. In the late afternoon we reached Cambridge, and found the streets as crowded as ever, and the stately colleges glowing in the tinted light. Then, just as the sun was beginning to show signs of setting, we found ourselves out on a great causeway crossing the Fen Country.

It is rich enough now, but how desolate it must have been in ancient times. For miles and miles one gazes over flatness unbroken, and through it runs the Way, eighty or ninety feet broad. On either side grass, shot with buttercups, beyond which is a deep ditch and a hawthorn hedge. Then cornfields and meadowlands, but neither villages nor farms, nothing to stop the wind, which fortunately just now is warm and soft, laden with the scent of the flowery waste over which it has been wandering.

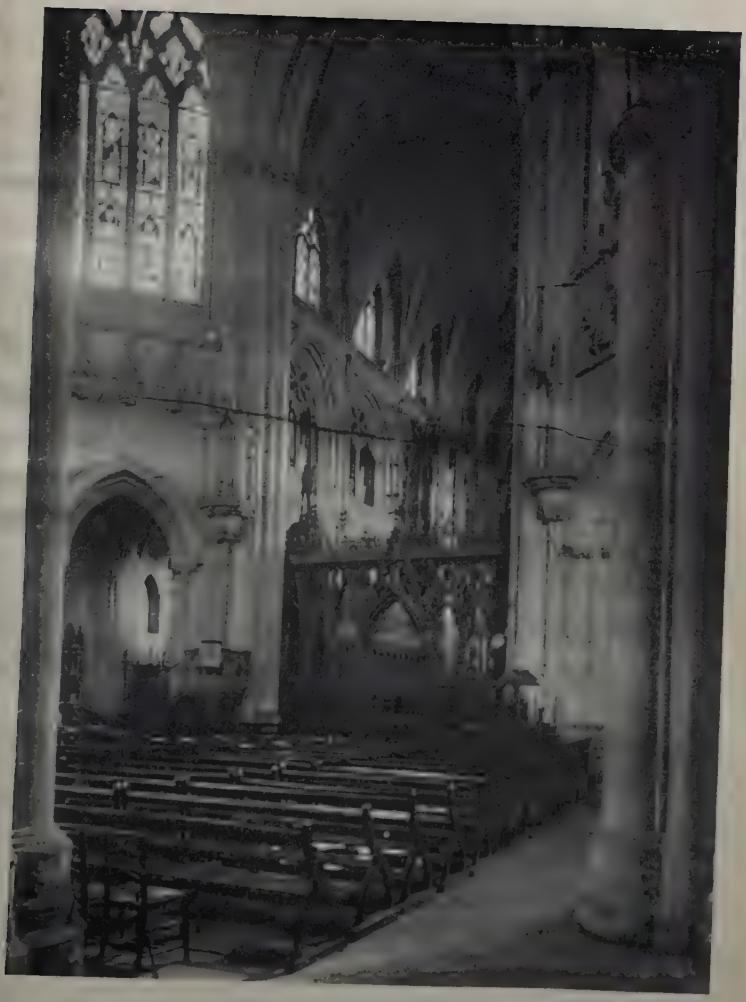
After some miles the monotony of this Dutch-like landscape became wearisome, and we strained our eyes forward to catch a first glimpse of the Cathedral which we knew we should presently see lying somewhere on the skyline. And sure enough, suddenly, through a gap in a distant hedge, appeared a tiny square tower, Ely. Then the road, crossing an ancient bridge, twisted like a snake, and for a while we saw no more of our goal, till, passing a village with a pilgrim cross,

there again, nearer but still far off and unsubstantial, appeared a second vision of the great church, standing upon the culminating point of Hereward's Camp of Refuge. And the sun was still shining, and across the immense blue sky the breeze was wafting great white clouds which took the forms of two huge flying angels with snowy garments and long diaphanous wings, and to our tired fancy seemed the spirits of the royal sisters, Audrey and Sexburga, come to welcome two belated pilgrims to their ruined sanctuary.

. . . . .

It was next morning that we first entered the Cathedral. How lovely is the approach to the west door! To the south lies the Bishop's Palace, built of mellow red brick, with stone mullions, and an oriel window in which I wish I were sitting, that I might more worthily picture to you the scene. For the palace is not hidden away behind high walls as in most cathedral cities, but, being a long building, forms one side of the pleasant garth, where children play in the sunshine, and women sit working and gossiping beneath the lime trees. We sit there, too, for awhile, looking up at the strange one-sided end of the Cathedral, trying to picture it as it was before the north-western portion was destroyed, till presently we leave the sunshine and enter the Galilee or porch, where in ancient times dead bodies were laid to await burial, penitents were stationed, and processions formed up.

There are only three of these beautiful Galilees



ELY CATHEDRAL.—THE OCTAGON AND SANCTUARY

now remaining in England, and as we make our way northward, we shall be fortunate enough to visit them all, for they are at Ely, Lincoln, and Durham.

As we enter the Cathedral from this outer chapel we pause to gaze up into the great west tower built by Bishop Riddell. Open it is almost to the very summit, and when the sunlight shines in through the many tiers of round-headed windows, the effect is extraordinarily beautiful and inspiring. Then next moment we find ourselves face to face with the long, unbroken vista of the Cathedral, the Norman nave with its painted roof, the choir, the matchless presbytery, to where, in the eastern wall, are the eight tall lancet lights, set three below and five above, forming together a wonderful and so far as I know unique whole, one vast window closing, and yet lighting this matchless perspective. And this is not the only wonder. For between nave and choir, supported by eight groups of tall, reed-like columns, is what is called the octagon, and above it the great lantern, known as Saint Audrey's crown, which floods with light this usually dark portion of a cathedral. Of it a modern writer has said: "There is no such a lantern in the world." Though I am no architect I can well believe it. To our eyes, become accustomed to the heavy magnificence of the nave, there suddenly appears, coming down from above, a dazzling radiance, falling from the twelve great windows of the lantern. Beyond lies the

mystery of the choir, and further still, in the presbytery, surely heaven itself, but faint and distant, as heaven I fear is to most of us.

It was in 1322 that the central tower, built by Bishop Simeon, collapsed. For a long time it had been threatening to fall, so that the monks had not dared to sing in the choir. Early one morning, just as they were returning to their monastery after matins, there was a mighty rumbling crash as of thunder, and looking up at the Cathedral they saw that the great tower had disappeared into a heap of ruins. As soon as they dared they returned to search for the treasured relics of their ancient foundress and her sisters, and beheld, oh miracle, that not a stone had fallen near the shrine. It was to that great monk-architect, Alan of Walsingham, that the task of rebuilding was entrusted. It was he who conceived the masterly and original idea of the octagon, which he achieved by omitting to replace the four fallen tower piers. It thus naturally occupies the full breadth of the nave, being carried up in stone as high as the vaulting, while on its summit was placed the wooden cupola popularly known as the crown of Saint Audrey.

It is impossible to convey any idea of the beauty of this fairy-like structure. It seems as though loving hands had wrought for centuries, as indeed no doubt they have, to fill every nook and corner with beauty. There you may see the heads of King Edward III. and Queen Philippa,

for whose visit to Ely the beautiful hall opposite Prior Crauden's Chapel was no doubt built, for this good Queen was a great benefactor to the Cathedral, and lived just at the time when Alan of Walsingham was finishing the octagon. There, too, are the heads of Bishop Hotham and of Alan himself. And carved quaintly into the huge stone brackets which support the vaulting, you may read the story of the great Audrey. You see her being married to the King of Northumbria, there she is making her escape from the King; again she is seen kneeling before Abbess Ebba receiving the veil. And there is that not unusual miracle of her staff taking root, which we find again at Glastonbury in the case of Saint Joseph of Arimathea. She is also represented during her escape from her husband taking refuge on a hill round which the waters have gathered to protect her. At last we find her at Ely being consecrated Abbess by Saint Wilfrid, and finally there is her death and burial. They are certainly a wonderfully interesting series of thirteenth-century sculptures, and being situated at so high a level, have happily escaped the vandalism which later destroyed most of our ancient monuments. Here, too, we shall find choirs of angels with glittering wings, playing on harps and trumpets, and above all, in the very centre of the roof, a boss representing Our Lord, His hand raised in blessing all who pass below. And it was just here, in this most beautiful place, that they laid Alan of Walsingham when he died.

But come, it is time that we, like the pilgrims of old, should make our way eastward to where once stood the shrine of Saint Audrey, the gentle saint, who for so many centuries was the one civilizing and purifying influence in this wild, savage Fenland. And as we walk slowly along we may picture the beautiful daughter of Anna, King of the East Anglians, married against her will when yet a child to Tonberct, ruler of the Southern Fenmen. Little girls in those days, especially if they had the misfortune to be born the daughters of kings, had usually a very unhappy fate, for their fathers looked upon them as mere chattels to be bartered away in exchange for political advantages. So poor little Audrey, in spite of her tears and prayers, was given to the Prince of the Gervii, as he was called, who bestowed upon her as her marriage gift this Isle of Ely which she was to love so well. For to Ely she came three years later on the death of her husband, and for five years lived happily in this lonely spot, surrounded by impassable swamps and rivers, till she was again forced for political reasons to quit her sanctuary, and become the wife of King Egfrid of York. So for twelve long years our Saint was Queen of York, and used her charming personality and holy influence for the good of her subjects. But all the while her heart was at Ely, and she remained a wife only in name, constantly beseeching the King, her husband, to allow her to retire from the world, and devote herself body and soul to her

first love, that Heavenly Bridegroom to whom through life she remained faithful.

At length Egfrid gave way, and after a year of preparation spent in the convent of her husband's aunt, the Abbess Ebba, Audrey went to rule over the religious house she had built on her Isle of Ely. As I have said, we may read her story in the sculptures of the Cathedral, just as the pilgrims, who came in ancient days to visit this most popular saint, read them. For we must never forget the primary object of the sculptures and pictured windows which adorn our cathedrals and churches, and how in early ages when very few could read, or had access to manuscripts, it was by means of them, aided by the explanations of the monks, that people learned the histories of the saints, and especially of the saints and heroes of the sacred scriptures.

And so we find Audrey at length established in her Fenland Home, and before long her faithful friend and spiritual advisor Wilfrid comes to visit her. They say that King Egfrid, repenting of his consent to her retirement, offered Saint Wilfrid untold wealth if he would only induce the Queen to return to him. But Wilfrid knew doubtless more about that marriage than we do, and decided that Audrey had better stay where she was. There in her Camp of Refuge, as it was called later, she lived a life of such austerity as would be impossible to most people, "never washing in a warm bath save when the greater festivals were at hand, and then using

it last of all, having first helped to wash the other handmaids of Christ," as the old writer says. She ate but once a day, and then most sparingly, and remained for hours in the wooden church she had caused to be built, lost in prayer and contemplation.

It was no doubt while she was thus engaged one day that the spirit of prophecy came upon her, and she foretold the coming of the plague which should depopulate the Island, and of which she herself, still young and beautiful, was to die. And here we are at the foot of the pedestal upon which for so many centuries rested the gorgeous shrine of Saint Audrey. In ancient days it stood immediately behind the high altar, and the CHASSE itself was of gold and silver set with jewels, glorious exceedingly, dazzling the eyes of the vast crowds of pilgrims who came, especially on the twenty-third of June, the anniversary of her death, to be healed of evil spirits by touching the linen in which her sacred body had been wrapped.

The old chronicler tells us, speaking of this most popular of East Anglian saints, that: "She was taken to the Lord in the midst of her people, and, as she had herself ordered, was buried there among them in a wooden coffin."

After she had lain undisturbed for sixteen years, her sister Sexburga, who had succeeded her as Abbess, having prepared a white marble coffin which certain monks had providentially discovered among the ruins of Grandchester,

had the Saint's body exhumed, and laid in its white sheet beneath a tent for the sisters to wash and prepare for translation to the church. Then suddenly the brothers and sisters who had gathered around heard a great cry of astonishment from the Abbess, for on removing the covering there lay the beautiful Audrey as though sleeping, and the physician Cynefrid who had lanced a terrible tumour in her neck only a day or so before she died, found, instead of the gaping wound with which she had been buried, nothing but a tiny scar.

And so having robed her afresh, and carried her into the church, they laid her in the white stone coffin which seemed as though fashioned expressly for her, and when her sisters died they themselves were laid near to her. And through the centuries which followed her death how many have sought her shrine. Hither came the hero Brithnoth, who, having been refused food and shelter for his men by the Abbot of Ramsey, came on to Ely, where the whole huge party was royally entertained. And so pleased was the chief at his generous treatment, that he not only gave to the monastery many valuable gifts of land, but ordained that if he fell in battle (and few men died in their beds in those days) he was to be buried in the abbey church. And so he was, with his six companions, and to-day they all lie, or their bones do, in seven strange little niches walled up on the south side of Bishop West's beautiful chapel. The great Canute

arrived one Candlemas day, driving over the frozen Fens, to worship at the shrine of the great Saint Audrey. Hither came Hereward the Wake, to beg her to exert her influence with the Almighty to save the land she loved from the foreigners who were threatening its liberty. And to the sacred Well of Etheldreda walked Torfreda, Hereward's wife, barefoot, clothed in sackcloth, and laden with self-imposed fetters, to beg the aid of the great Saint against the Norman hosts who were gathered around the Isle of Refuge. All who have read Kingsley's well-known book will remember how Torfreda, having made her petition to Saint Audrey, was inspired by a sudden thought: "As I prayed I looked out over the Fens," she says to Hereward, "and Saint Etheldreda put a thought into my mind. . . . Will the reeds burn Hereward?" And later, when all was over, and Normans and Saxons lay rotting together beneath the black waters of the Fens, came the great William himself, and many another royal and noble personage, all bestowing gifts upon the monastery and church of the Virgin Saint of Ely and her sisters. And yet I think it was the poor whom Saint Audrey loved best, those helpless sick and suffering who crowded to Ely every year on the anniversary of her first translation. It was then that the celebrated Fair of Saint Audrey was held, when little cheap mementos were sold to the pilgrims, which gave rise to the word tawdry.

The abbots and bishops of Ely were veritable

princes in those days, some of the greatest statesmen of their time. They owned no less than ten palaces, and Ely Place, Holborn, was their magnificent London house. There was Simeon, own cousin to William the Conqueror. He it was who began the present Cathedral. And there was Nigel, Treasurer of Henry I., and William Longchamp, Chancellor of Edward I., who governed the south of England whenever the King was absent. And then there was Hugh Northwold, of whom Matthew Paris tells, who was sent to Provence to arrange for the marriage of the Princess Aliénor with Henry III. of England, brought her home in triumph, and was one of the bishops who assisted at her coronation in Westminster Abbey. It was this same Hugh who paid for the building of the magnificent presbytery at Ely, where his body still lies buried. His is that curious monument in the north choir aisle where the Bishop is depicted lying in his vestments, and on the soles of his shoes he has caused to be sculptured the story of the martyrdom of Saint Edmund, Edmundsbury having been his native town. He had also a marble throne, one arm of which may still be seen, and on it a wolf bearing in its mouth the head of the martyr. Thomas Arundel, too, whom we have seen later when Archbishop of Canterbury, crowning King Henry IV. at Westminster, was once Bishop of Ely and rebuilt the Bishop's Palace in London. And perhaps best known and most practical of all was John

Morton, who was one of the first to attempt the drainage of the Fens by means of the canal which still bears his name. He is that Bishop of Ely who, according to Shakespeare, grew such fine strawberries in his gardens at Ely Place in Holborn! Another great bishop was Nicholas West, the son of the Putney baker, who accompanied Henry VIII. on his journey to France to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. We are not likely to forget Bishop West, for he built that most exquisite of chantries which bears his name, and where Brithnoth and the other Saxon worthies lie buried.

But in the south aisle near the west end of the Cathedral is to be seen the foot of an old stone cross, which appears so ancient, even in this most ancient portion of the Cathedral, that we pause before it.

I was trying to read the scarcely legible inscription when the verger, Mr Wells, to whose kindness I already owed so much, happened to pass—

> "LUCEM TUAM OVINO
> DA DEUS ET REQUIEM, AMEN"—

he read, and suddenly we found ourselves back in the days of Queen Audrey, long before the present Cathedral, or the tombs we have been visiting were thought of. For this is believed to be the foot of the cross set up in the graveyard of the first monastery at Ely, in memory of Ouini or Ovin, the faithful servant of the saintly Queen. We may read in that most delightful of books,

Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, the beautiful story of Ovin. How in his early days he had followed and guarded Audrey in her long journey to the north, and remained her faithful servant and steward, till, like so many in those fervent times, he felt himself called to renounce the world and its honours, for he was indeed a great noble. It was to the door of Saint Chad's monastery at Lastingham that he came. There, having stripped himself of his rich garments, even to the coarse hair shirt he had always worn beneath them, and carrying nothing save an axe and a hatchet, he begged to be admitted, not for leisure, as he said, but for labour. And labour he did for years, growing holier and holier, working out of doors while his brethren read, wrote, taught, and meditated within. When Saint Chad was finally removed to Lichfield, Ovin followed him and continued there his laborious manner of life, and so acceptable was his honest toil to Almighty God, that it was the humble Ovin who was chosen from among all the brethren, to hear the songs of the angels who came to announce to the holy Bishop his departure from this world.

"Father," said Ovin, prostrating himself upon the earth, "Father, may I ask you somewhat?" And Chad replied: "Ask what you will, my son." "I beseech you tell me what of that song coming down from Heaven, and returning thither again." And the Abbot answered: "They were angelic spirits who came to call me to the Heaven I have always loved and desired.

After seven days they will return and take me with them."

After this passing of Saint Chad, Ovin must have sought Saint Wilfrid when he was driven away from York. For we find them both at the new monastery which Saint Audrey had built at Ely, the twin establishment for monks and nuns. And though we hear no more of the faithful steward, there can be no doubt that when he died this cross was erected by his affectionate and grateful mistress.

And there we must leave the interior of the Cathedral, and wander out into the town, which stands so strangely on its hill overlooking the boundless flats. We shall find it quiet enough to-day, pleasant and prosperous, with its old tea-shop, and Bell Inn, which my husband assured me had scarcely changed since he stayed there as a little boy. While walking in the park which lies on the southern side of the Cathedral, we meet an ancient *beadsman*, who, seeing us stop to admire a certain matchless view of the vast building, enquires what we think of *OUR* Cathedral, and when we express our admiration: "Nothing finer in the world," says he, and gazes up with such intense pride at the mighty structure, that he might well be a reincarnation of the great Alan of Walsingham who designed the greater part of what is most beautiful in it. These beadsmen are very picturesque, and interested me greatly. I suppose they must have taken to their beautiful purple gowns, which give

such a charming note of colour to the grey interior of the nave, subsequently to the days of that shivering beadsman of whom Keats wrote, for they look extremely comfortable and well to do. If I had not feared to shock the protestant sensibilities of this good man, I should have liked to have asked him for which of the ancient benefactors to his Cathedral he was employed to pray, those many "knights and ladies praying in dumb oratories," who left large sums to the Church of Ely that they might be remembered after death. However, I found that he sang every morning at matins in the lovely Lady Chapel, and had done so for forty years.

I think that one of the great charms of Ely Cathedral is its lovely setting. In this respect I find it unsurpassed save by Durham. It is so intimate and friendly. To the south is the beautiful park, with Cherry Hill rising toward the west, and great shadowy chestnuts and limes beneath which fat lazy Fenland cows are feeding, or lying half hidden among the luscious grass. Here, after school, little girls bring tiny brothers and sisters, scarcely smaller than themselves, and sit making daisy chains, gossiping in their grave old womanly fashion, while the babies gather buttercups, so that the air is full of shrill little voices and the sound of childish laughter.

You may reach this children's paradise by way of the Ely Porta or Monastery Gateway, built in the fourteenth century by Prior Buckton. All the ground just now is covered with a thick

carpet of snowy blossom, from the group of huge chestnuts, which have grown up and shade the courtyard as it must once have been. Here you will find ancient walls, and wonderful old houses, chief among which is the Deanery, once the refectory of the Monastery, in which so many great visitors were entertained in days of old. And the Deanery garden! Picture in the background the Minster, grey, ancient, dreaming over its past joys and sorrows, with birds of yesterday nesting among its arches, and circling above its pinnacles, domed with the same blue heaven that watched over its foundation and will doubtless one day look down upon its ruin. And between it and ourselves the flowers. For the garden of the Deanery is an ordered wilderness of spring blossom. There are pansies of every hue, and wall-flowers, and forget-me-nots, and borders of great pink daisies, while by an old southern wall tall tree fuchsias are already crimson with blossom. And in the midst is a birds' bath which would have delighted the heart of Saint Francis, so filled is it with clear cold water for tired wings to bathe in.

. . . . .

Before we leave Ely we must be sure to go and see Prior Crauden's Chapel, perhaps the most beautiful because the least changed building in all this wonderful little city. The prior for whom it was built was the bosom friend of that great monk-architect, Alan of Walsingham, and the bishop of those days was John Hotham. For

ELY CATHEDRAL FROM THE DEAN'S GARDEN

the latter, Alan designed the magnificent altar tomb which formerly stood just behind the high altar. But for the prior he conceived this most perfect of architectural gems which, even in our days, still bears the name of his beloved friend. This Alan of Walsingham may well be regarded as the second founder of Ely, so much of its beauty and charm are due to his genius. This little chapel for instance. It is approached from without by a tiny turret stair, so narrow that one cannot but hope that the good prior for whom it was constructed was of slender build. At the top one enters a door to find oneself in the north-west corner of a tiny, tiny building, so perfect, so little changed that one seems to have stepped back six hundred years, and to be waiting for good Prior Crauden to arrive and offer Mass at his ancient altar. True the colours which once adorned it have disappeared, and the brackets have been robbed of their statues, but in spite of this it still retains an extraordinary amount of the loving work which was lavished upon it.

A short time ago a lady asked me why the churches of old were so much more beautiful than those of to-day, and I replied that perhaps it is because they were not built by contract, but that the ancient folk worked for the love and glory of God, as was but natural when the church was regarded as a house for God Himself to dwell in. Certainly if one may judge Alan of Walsingham by this standard, he was not only one of the greatest of artists, but a religious enthusiast, for

he has filled every nook and corner of this chapel with beauty. Even the tiles which pave the eastern end are wonderful. There you have the story of the Fall of Man. Eve is giving her husband an apple, and a human-headed snake with a most disagreeable face has twined himself round the tree. As for Adam he is already eating one apple while he holds out his hand greedily for another. I cannot describe the tabernacle work of this chapel. It is like frozen lace, or the delicate tracery which frost draws on a window pane. What must have been its beauty on the day of its consecration!

And then, think that this one man was responsible for the Lady Chapel, ruined now, but matchless even in its decay. Indeed most of the exquisite features of the Cathedral are due to his genius, and when we turn from them and leave Ely to continue our way northward, I think it will be with a greater respect and gratitude for the old monks who gave their time and talents so generously, and worked for love rather than money.

II

PETERBOROUGH

The road from Ely to Peterborough would be intolerably monotonous save with a motor. It consists for the most part of a causeway running between broad dykes, filled with brown stagnant water, beyond which lie vast flat regions of black soil, deep and rich, where crops are beginning to spring. Occasionally one is startled by the sight of a sail moving slowly across these gloomy fields, for the whole landscape is intersected by canals, most useful for traffic in this land where roads are scarce. In very ancient times the region we are traversing must have formed the vast estuary of the five rivers which drain the midland counties, and Ely was an island, several miles from the actual shore. According to Kingsley, the Fens, even in the seventh century, when the anchorite Guthlac settled at Croyland, were probably very like the swampy shores at the mouth of the Mississippi, "a labyrinth of black wandering streams, broad lagoons, morasses submerged every springtide, vast copses of willows, alder, and grey poplar. . . . Nature, left to herself, ran into wild riot and chaos, . . . till the whole fen became one dismal swamp."

Even to-day, with its ordered canals and well cultivated fields, it is dreary enough to one accustomed to the sunny hills and flowery vales of Sussex, and we grew weary of the desolate landscape as we sped over it, wondering how Hereward and his mare, Swallow, made their way through the swamps and quagmires, when, before departing into exile, he journeyed to Peterborough to bid farewell to his uncle, Brando the Prior, and Abbot Leofric. Every now and then, on the far horizon, one would see a group of trees, and know that a village had taken advantage of some slight elevation to plant itself. At Chatteris and March the women were coming in from their day's work among the flats, looking far more attractive in their old-world sunbonnets than their high-heeled, frowsy-haired sisters of the towns. During the latter part of our way our attention was much taken up with crossing and re-crossing the canals and railways, which as one nears Peterborough become intricate and rather annoying. Then at last, when our eyes were free once more to wander out into the distance, we saw the skyline bristling with tall chimneys, and dulled by the smoke of a city. Then came the first glimpse of the great Fenland Church of Saint Peter, growing vaster and vaster as one approached, till gradually even it vanished, lost among the forest of factories, warehouses, and other huge buildings, which have of recent years grown up under its shadow. What would Peada, King of Mid Anglia, and Bishop Saexwulf think of their little Monastery of

Medeshamstede, if they could see the city to which it has given birth! For this crowded metropolis of the Fens into which, with much hooting and stopping we are now trying to force our way, was known in the seventh century as Medeshamstede, or The Place of the Dwelling in the Meads. There was no town there in those days, not even a village. It consisted probably of just a few acres of solid ground lying on the borders of the great marsh. Here Peada, the newly converted King of Mercia and Mid Anglia, full of enthusiasm for the spread of Christianity, determined to build a monastery of which Saexwulf the Earl should be architect and Abbot. The church itself was dedicated to Saint Peter, Saint Paul, and Saint Andrew, and I suppose the cabins and huts which the workmen built for themselves (there being no village in which they could shelter) formed the beginning of the new town. Later would come traders, and hostels would be set up for pilgrims, till to-day the city of Peterborough, as it has come to be called, is a great and populous place, into which, being market day, it was extremely difficult and unpleasant to enter. However, at length we found our hotel, and a garage for Elizabeth, and after tea set forth to visit the Cathedral, which stands on the site of the first ancient worshipping place, destroyed like all the other Fenland churches by the Danes in the ninth century.

The approach to Peterborough Cathedral is sudden. One moment you are threading your

way through the crowded streets, pushed and jostled by pedestrians, and constantly in fear of your life from motor lorries and bicycles, when suddenly, just opposite the market hall, one is startled by a grim old Norman gateway. The town itself appears so modern, with its Liptons, its Maypoles, its International and World's Stores, its Cash Chemists and cheap clothing depots, that the sight of this eight-hundred-year-old veteran is very impressive indeed. How indignant Abbot Benedict would be at the crowds of noisy trippers who arrive in huge char-a-bancs, and stroll about photographing and criticizing his holy places. In his time no one, of whatever rank, ventured to pass into the Minster Close without removing his shoes, so sacred was this great House of God esteemed. In those days the precincts of the Abbey were enclosed by a high wall pierced by the gateway beneath which we are standing. And the Benedictine monastery of Peterborough was one of the most renowned in England: "Proud Peterborough" it was called, and I dare say with reason, for it was a place which kings and nobles delighted to honour with their presence and gifts. It was a Benedictine monastery, and the Benedictine order was extremely popular in England, the genial character of its rule suiting the English temperament better than that of the more austere orders, which flourished later on the Continent.

At the time when King Peada founded the first church and religious house at Medeshamstede,

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL
VIEW FROM S.W. OF NAVE AND TRANSEPT

little more than a century had elapsed since the great Saint Benedict had been laid to rest in the oratory of Saint John, which he had re-formed out of a Temple of Apollo, and his life and teaching were yet fresh in the minds of the monks. Later, no doubt, defects may have crept in, so that some of the stories we hear of the worldliness and insubordination of Benedictine houses were not without foundation. But the poor people of East Anglia would have been in a far more sorry plight than they were, had it not been for the good monks of Ely and Peterborough. It was to the monastery gate they came in times of famine and sickness, never departing without relief, for the monks were the only poor law officers and doctors in those days, and saw to the bodies of their neighbours as well as their souls. When we read of persons leaving vast sums to these great religious houses, we must try to place ourselves back in the times when they existed, and were the only relief houses and hospitals, just as they were the only places in which travellers could find food and shelter. Anyone who has tramped over the Simplon or the Great St. Bernard will realize what travelling must have been like in ancient days, when the world was sparsely populated, and hotels almost a thing unknown.

So when the good Peada and his sisters founded the church and monastery of Saint Peter, they were not only providing for the religious wants of their people, but feeding the hungry, tending the sick, and sheltering the homeless. This is perhaps

seen even more clearly when we come to the time of the robbing and destruction of the monasteries under Henry VIII. For then, we are told, "so much poverty and misery was seen abroad as had not been known since England was a nation."

But it is time we turned our attention to the great Cathedral itself. As we look up at the huge west front we shall, I think, not disagree with those who consider it the finest in the world. In the lower part of the central arch, which is narrower than the others, is a curious and very beautiful porch, flanked by two little towers, and surmounted by a chamber. In spite of its beauty, which is undeniable, I think that it rather spoils the grand simplicity of the façade, detracting as it does from the height of the central arch, but its effect is so quaint and original that one cannot resent it. Passing beneath the low doorway of this "Parvis," we find ourselves in the west transept, which stretches from north to south across the huge, towering, Norman nave built by Abbot Benedict in the twelfth century. He had been Prior of Canterbury, and the devoted admirer of Saint Thomas Becket, precious relics of whom he brought with him to Peterborough.

It was while we were looking at the portrait of the old sexton, Scarlett, that we fell in with a party of gentlemen who I think must have belonged to some archæological society, and were visiting the Cathedral under the guidance of a very well-informed official, who recited the epitaph :—

"You see old Scarlett's picture stand on hie
But at your feet here doth his body lye,
His gravestone doth his age and death time show,
His office by these tokens you may know.
Second to none for strength and sturdye limm
A scare babe mighty voice with visage grim.
He had interd two queens within this place
And this townes householders in his lives space
Twice over: But at length his own time came;
What he for others did for him the same
Was done: No doubt his soul doth live for aye
In Heaven: Tho' here his body clad in clay."

The two Queens interred by the old sexton were Katherine of Aragon and Mary Queen of Scots. We shall find the grave of the former in the north choir aisle; a plain slab of dark marble, too much worn by the feet of passers-by for any inscription to be discernible. There she still lies, this good, faithful wife, whose only fault was that she was not young and gay enough to keep the wandering affection of her selfish, licentious husband.

As we stand looking down at the stone we think of the long years which had passed since she left her Spanish home to become the wife of Henry's elder brother, Arthur. We are told that she charmed everyone by her beauty and her modesty, just as she charmed her avaricious father-in-law by her splendid dowry. Four months later we see the little girl a widow, and listen to all the sordid bartering which takes place between money-loving old Henry VII. and her equally greedy parents, leading at last to the second wedding with

the young Henry, who was six years her junior. Of their five children only the Princess Mary lived to grow up, and Henry, disappointed at the death of the three boys Katherine bore him, began to tire of his already ageing wife, and to find consolation elsewhere. It is a sad, cruel story, yet through it all the beautiful Spanish lady passes unsullied, but with a heart ever growing heavier, and a soul more and more detached from this world which had treated her so cruelly. Then came the divorce, and Katherine's pure mind must have sickened unto death as the real soul of this husband whom she had loved so faithfully, this father of her dead children, and her lovely young daughter, was gradually revealed to her.

The woman for whom the Queen was being set aside had already supplanted her own sister in Henry's affections : now she aimed at nothing less than the crown. She had had a French governess named Simonette, and had moreover gone to France in the train of Henry's sister Mary, at the time of the marriage of the latter with King Louis. She could dance the latest French dances, she could sing the latest French songs, she knew all the latest games, and could invent others. She dressed in the most exquisite French fashions, in short, according to her biographer, " she rivalled Venus herself ! "

Katherine, on the other hand, was a sad, middle-aged woman, whom sickness and neglect had rendered older than her years. Her auburn hair, so admired at the time of her marriage, was faded,

her eyes grown dim with sorrow. What chance had she against this handsome siren who was determined to captivate the pleasure-loving King? We see her driven from Windsor and living her solitary life at Ampthill: for Henry had taken Mary her daughter from her, and left her in such poverty that she had not even the means to keep a horse or pay her servants their wages. And all this was done in order to force Katherine to acknowledge that her marriage with the King had been illegal, and that her daughter Mary was illegitimate, in order that Anne's daughter might inherit the crown. But all that they could extract from her was: "As to the Princess, my daughter, she is the King's true child." And so the divorce was at last resolved upon, and Henry, not being able to induce the Pope to grant it, declared himself head of the Church in England, divorced himself, and married the mother of the little Elizabeth.

And now we are standing looking down upon the slab which still covers all that remains on earth of Queen Katherine. She had been removed from Ampthill to Bugden; from Bugden, as she refused to be taken to the malaria-haunted swamps of Fotheringay, she was conveyed to Kimbolton Castle, "an ancient pile, with tower, and gateway, and double ditch, a very strong place, guarding the road from Bedford to Huntingdon." And it was in this grim fortress that she breathed her last. So worn was she by sickness and sorrow that when her doctor begged her to have a second

opinion, "Nay," said she, "I will have no other physician, but wholly commit myself to the pleasure of God."

Before she passed away she wrote to the King begging that she might see her daughter once again. But even this last request was refused by Henry. However, about six o'clock on that bitter New Year's Night there arrived at the castle a very dear and old friend of hers, Marie de Salucci, one of the four maids of honour who had accompanied her to England when she came a young bride to Arthur, Prince of Wales. In spite of resistance this lady forced her way into the presence of the dying Queen, and never left her till all was over.

Then followed a pompous funeral: for Henry, so mean that immediately on hearing of the death he sent one of his own hirelings to seize the dead woman's gowns and jewellery, gave orders for her to be buried in Peterborough Cathedral with the utmost grandeur, saying that he would have to her monument one of the goodliest in Christendom, meaning the great church itself. And when, shortly after, the other monastic churches were more or less destroyed, Peterborough was spared for the sake of the good, faithful Queen who lay buried therein. As we stand by the grave we can picture the funeral procession marching slowly up the nave, and hear once more the voices of the monks as they sing the Dies Iræ: while before our mind's eye stands the great black velvet hearse with the arms of Spain, and the silver

cross, and the tall yellow candles casting their light on the coffin of Katherine, Queen of England.

There was a strange story told about these same candles. It was, as we know, but a very short time after the death of Katherine, that Anne Boleyn, who had dressed herself and her ladies in gayest attire on hearing of the event, was herself laid low. On the day before she was beheaded, they say that the great candles around Katherine's grave lighted themselves before matins, and extinguished themselves at the close of the service.

But the great hearse has long since disappeared, and no candles cast their yellow light upon the stone. Old Scarlett, the sexton who buried the Queen, has been laid to his rest for centuries, and we only know by tradition where Katherine, once Queen of England, lies buried, for no inscription which I could read marks her grave.

On the south side of the choir, immediately opposite the tomb of which I have been speaking, was buried another Queen, Mary of Scotland, the victim of Elizabeth, daughter of Henry and Anne Boleyn. We have all heard the story of this beautiful and unfortunate Queen. We have met her in her girlhood over in France, at Amboise and at Chenonceaux, with her first husband, the young French King. We have accompanied her in her long sea passage back to Scotland, and followed her through all the unhappy years of her stormy reign, till now we find her imprisoned in that very Castle of Fotheringay, to which Queen Katherine

of Aragon had said she would not go "unless drawn by ropes." There the poor Queen of Scots remained until that woeful seventh of February 1586, when the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent, with their followers, arrived bearing the news that she was to die next morning. I suppose we have all read in some form or other the pitiful story of those last few hours. How she was refused a priest to visit her and give her Holy Communion, how she spent her last evening comforting her servants who adored her, looking through her will, and at the usual hour going to rest and sleeping peacefully till five, when she rose to her prayers. After that she was clothed, "having on her head a dressing of lawn, edged with bone lace, and above it a veil of the same, bowed out with wire, and her cuffs suitable. About her neck was a pomander chain, and an Agnus Dei hanging at a black riband, a crucifix in her hand, a pair of beads at her girdle with a golden cross at the end." Her dress was of black satin training upon the ground, with long hanging sleeves trimmed with acorn buttons of jet and pearl, the sleeves over her arms slashed to give sight of purple velvet beneath. And so she came forth from her chamber, and was met by the English Earls and conducted to the great hall of the castle where she was to suffer. Two only of her women and four of her men were allowed to remain with her, and that only after much persuasion on her part. "Alas!" said she on being refused, "Alas, poor souls, it will do them good

to bid their mistress farewell: Your Mistress being a maiden queen for womanhood's sake would not deny me this courtesie!" (I wonder what Elizabeth felt as she heard the gentle words of her victim repeated!)

While the Dean of Peterborough uttered a long prayer, Mary was engaged with her own devotions, sometimes in Latin, sometimes in English. Then the two executioners and her ladies helped her to unrobe, at which she smiled, saying that she had never before been helped by such grooms, nor was she used to put off her clothes before such a company. Then after her women had wrapped her head and face in a Corpus Christi cloth, she knelt down on a cushion, saying: "In te Domine speravi, ne confundar in aeternum." After groping for the block a moment, she laid down her head, crying out: "Into Thy Hands I commend my spirit." . . .

They say that when the executioner showed the head to the company, it looked much older than her years, and the hair was grey and polled short. As the man went to remove her stockings, her little dog crept from under her coat and laid himself down between her head and her body, and being stained with her blood had to be taken and washed.

Gunton, in his "History of the Church of Peterborough," written within a century after the execution, gives an account of the funeral. Mary had been embalmed, and the burial did not take place until six months after her death. The

whole church was then draped in black, and a rich hearse was erected close to the grave which old Scarlett the sexton had prepared. The day previously the body had been brought from Fotheringay by torchlight, in a chariot covered with black velvet, and attended by Garter King at Arms and other heralds. The Bishop met the body at the great west door, and followed by the coffin, which weighed nine hundred pounds, led the way to the southern side of the choir, where an opening had been made into a vault below. And there Mary of Scotland was laid to rest, and the grave covered in, all but a hole which was left that the staves might be broken and cast upon the coffin, for after all she was a Queen, and own cousin to Elizabeth. The actual service took place a day later, when these Norman arches looked down upon a great procession of Scotch and English nobles, headed by the Countess of Bedford as chief mourner. And as they passed along, the choir sang an anthem, and after the Scots who were Catholics had visited the grave and departed, the Bishop of Lincoln preached a sermon, in which he remarked that he had not much to say as to the *life and death* of the high and mighty Princess Mary, late Queen of Scotland, as he was not acquainted with the one nor present at the other, . . . but that they must hope well of her salvation, for, as Father Luther was wont to say, "many a one that liveth a Papist, dieth a Protestant."

About twenty-five years after this great scene at

Peterborough, the son of Queen Mary, James the First, being on the throne of England, ordered her body to be exhumed and taken to Westminster Abbey, where the murdered Queen now lies, buried in the same chapel as her murderess.

There is a very curious and beautiful feature in Peterborough Cathedral called The New Building, though indeed it is four hundred years old. It is the only portion of the church which is not Norman, and the view which strikes one on passing from the severity of the Norman choir into this brilliant, dainty, fairylike structure, is very startling, and I think is heightened by the absence of stained glass. This lovely place was erected by Abbot Ashton and Abbot Kirton between 1228 and 1241 to contain the relics of which there were then an immense number at Peterborough, chief among them being the celebrated Incorruptible Arm of Saint Oswald. This exquisite roof, which spreads like a forest of giant palm fronds above us, has often looked down upon this celebrated relic, which was exhibited to pilgrims on certain days of the year, when they would be told the story of the holy King sitting at meat one Easter day, and beside him his friend Bishop Aidan. The country folk in those days were in a very different condition from what they are now, and it was the custom for the poor to crowd around the castle door hoping to receive some of the "crumbs which fell from the rich man's table." On this Easter morning the steward had already given away all there was to spare, and yet there

were numbers of poor souls crying out for bread. So coming to the King, who was just about to begin his meal, he asked what was to be done as there was no food left save that which lay upon the King's heavy silver dish. "Then the King," says the chronicler, "commanded the meat which was set before him to be carried out to the poor, and even the dish to be broken up and divided piecemeal among them." And Aidan, delighted at such an act of piety, seized the right hand of Oswald, crying: "May this hand never, never wither!" And it never did. For when the good King, of whom we shall hear more when we reach Durham, was killed in battle by the savage pagan Penda, who cut off his victim's head and arms and exposed them on a stake, they remained incorruptible, and the head, which had for eight years been beloved by rich and poor, was carried to Lindisfarne and thence to Durham, while the arms were preserved at Bamborough Castle, till one, that very right hand which had given the meat to the hungry, was taken to Peterborough and, enclosed in a magnificent reliquary, was regarded as one of the chief treasures of the Cathedral. In 1515 a seditious monk named John Walpool was accused of having stolen jewels from the shrine of Saint Oswald, to give to certain women of the town. That was the beginning of the end! True, a few years later, Cardinal Wolsey came to Peterborough and kept his Easter, carrying his palm on Palm Sunday, walking in procession with the monks, and on Maundy

Thursday washing and kissing the feet of fifty-nine poor people. But the Abbot at that time was John Chambers, of whom the old historian of Peterborough says :—

"He loved to sleep in a whole skin, and desired to die in his nest wherein he had lived so long"; which I take to imply that when the emissaries of Henry arrived to take their inventory of the treasures of the Cathedral, the Abbot made no difficulties, but, as Gunton says, "complied with that great dissolution of Abbeys that the King should continue him in his place." I have before me a copy of this inventory, including a list of the wonderful vestments. I wonder what became of them! During the French Revolution the rich copes and chasubles from the churches were given to the women of the town for dresses; it may well be that the ancient embroidered vestments of Peterborough underwent a similar fate. And the arm of King Oswald? I do not know. Perhaps some faithful monk hid it in the cloister well, where, centuries earlier, Saint Chad is said to have concealed the heart of his young disciple Wulfade. And speaking of the cloisters reminds one of the painted glass which once adorned them. In the south was portrayed the history of the Old Testament; in the east the Life of Our Lord; in the northern windows were pictures of the kings; while in the west was to be read the history of the Church of Peterborough from its first foundation by the repentant Peada, to its restoration under King Edgar. They were not only of the

greatest interest, but valuable for the teaching of sacred history to those many persons who could not read. But Cromwell and his soldiers had no mercy on things sacred or beautiful, and not only wrecked all they could reach in the Cathedral, but utterly destroyed these priceless records of its past history. For beneath each picture was a verse explaining the event it portrayed, thus :—

Window 1. King Penda a Paynim as writing seyth
Gate yese five children of Christien feyth.

2. The noble King Peada by God's grace
Was the first founder of this place.

3. By Queen Erminyld had King Wulfere
These twey sons that ye see here.

4. Wulfade rideth as he was wont
Into the forest the Hart to hunt.

The old rhyme goes on to tell, much as I have told it when speaking of Lichfield, how Prince Wulfade was led by the Hart to the "Well that lay beside Seynt Chaddys cell," the beast forthwith disappearing. Much astonished, the Prince asked the hermit what has become of the Hart, and receives the answer :—

"The Hart that hither thee hath brought
Is sent by Christ that thee hath bought."

And the story continues :—

"Wulfade prayd Chad that ghostly Leech
The faith of Christ him for to teach."

And forthwith becomes a Christian, and

" Is baptized and hoseled Christys knight."

Although, as I say, I have told the story elsewhere, I give the remainder of the ancient rhymed version for the sake of its quaint and charming simplicity. Each window was in four panels, and the numbers refer to each division.

1. Wulfade told his brother Rufine
   That he was christned by Chaddys doctrine.
2. " Rufine to Wulfade said again
   Christned also would I fain."
3. Wulfade Rufine to Seynt Chad leedeth
   And Chad with love of Faith him feedeth.
4. Rufine is Christned by Seynt Chaddys
   And Wulfade his brother his Godfather is.

Then follows the tragedy which leads to the foundation of this great Christian church we are visiting, for the fifth window bore these verses, and above them paintings of the events.

1. Werbode steward to King Wulfere
   Told that his Sons Christned were.
2. Toward the Chapel Wulfere gan goe
   By guiding of Werbode Christys foe.
3. Into the chappel entered the King
   And found his Sons worshipping.
4. Wulfere in woodness his sword he drew
   And both his Sons anon he slew.

1. King Wulfere with Werbode yoo
   Burying gave his sons two.

(They were buried among the ruins of the oratory, which the King destroyed.)

2. Werbode for vengeance his own flesh tare
The Devil him strangled and to hell bare.

3. Wulfere for sorrow anon was sick
In bed he lay a dead man like.

4. Seynt Ermenyld that Blessed Queen
Counselled Wulfere to shrive him cleen.

1. Wulfere contrite hyed him to Chad
As Ermenyld him counselled had.

2. Chad bade Wulfere for his sin
Abbeys to build his Realm within.

3. Wulfere in hast performed then
Brough (old name for Peterborough) that Peada his brother began.

4. Wulfere endured with high devotion
The Abbey of Brough with great possession.

1. The third brother King Ethelred
Confirmed both his brothers' deed.

2. Saxulf that here first Abbot was
For Ankerys (anchorites) at Thorney made a place.

3. After came Danes and Brough brent (burned)
And slew the Monkeys (monks) as they went.

4. Fourscore years, and sixteen
Stood Brough destroyed by Danes teen.

Then followed the account of the restoration under King Edgar and King Athelwold, and the chronicler from whose pages I have copied the poem ends by a prayer that the church may stand

and be employed for God's glory, and his people's good; though, he adds quaintly, "How far the usurped authority of the late times was propitious I leave the world to judge." And there follows an Act concerning the Minster in Peterborough, passed in 1651, enacting that the great church called the Minster shall for all time be used for the public worship and service of God, and for a workhouse to employ the poorer sort of people in manufactures, the inhabitants to pay for the upkeep of the building.

A certain monk of Peterborough has left a curious and charming legend of the interview of the repentant Wulfere with Saint Chad, which I cannot forbear telling: "The Saint having prayed with the King in his oratory put off his vestment, and hanged it upon a sunbeam, which supported it that it fell not to the ground: which seeing King Wulfere put off his gloves and belt and assayed to hang them there also, but they presently fell to the ground, whereat King Wulfere was the more confirmed in the Christian Faith."

Before leaving Peterborough we should return to the New Building and notice that remarkable stone about which so much has been said and written. It is called The Monk's Stone, and has something of the appearance of a great Noah's Ark, the roof-like top being sculptured with leaves, and birds, and strange knots and circles, such as we see also on two old Saxon coffin-lids, still in place just below the pavement of the north transept. On either side of the Monk's Stone are

sculptured what are probably the monks who were martyred by the Danes on that terrible day when, having destroyed Croyland, they fell upon Peterborough, or Medeshamstede as it was then called. Unfortunately one of the Danish leaders named Tulba was killed by a stone cast down from the monastery, whereat his brother Hulba was so enraged that he slaughtered all the monks with his own hand, while his soldiers massacred the villagers. As to the aged Abbot Hedda he also was slain, and the altars were broken, the ancient books and manuscripts destroyed, and the whole place left desolate. Now Croyland had fared somewhat better than Medeshamstede, for some of the monks had escaped, and had begun to set their house in order again. To them came the news of the awful fate of Medeshamstede, and how the dead were lying still unburied around their ruined Minster. Then arose the good Godric who had been elected Abbot in the place of Theodorus whom the savage Danish king had slain upon the high altar. With him Godric took a few monks and made his way across the Fens, to the ghastly ruins among which lay those remains of the slaughtered dead that had been spared by the beasts and birds. They gathered them together into one vast grave at the east end of the church, and in the midst laid Hedda the Abbot, setting over him this stone. And every year afterwards so long as he lived, upon the day of the Feast of Saint Cecilia, Godric made a pilgrimage to the place, and pitching his tent over the stone, said Masses

during two days for the souls of Hedda and his martyred monks.

Finally, we should descend through a trap-door in the south choir aisle into what was once the Saxon Church. For it was here that the wild, untameable Hereward the Wake watched before the altar, and in the morning was armed a knight by his uncle, Brando the Prior. There is not much of this first church left save the foundations, but our imagination will readily call up the scene of the huge English champion and his companions laying their belts and swords upon the altar, that altar, the remains of which assuredly lie in the dark beneath the pavement we have been treading.

III

LINCOLN

We spent the Sunday at Peterborough, for it was a cold, wet day, and the hotel lounge, with its big fire and deep soft chairs, was very comfortable. There was no one else to enjoy it save a honeymoon couple, who took possession of the couch on one side of the hearth while we, lulled by their billing and cooing, dozed over our books on the other.

Next morning was clear and fine, and we started off north by the Lincoln Road, which, after passing under the railway, winds curiously about over the Fens as it finds solid ground to rest upon. Away to the left lay the remains of the great Roman highway going straight ahead, climbing a hill, and dipping down again on to the flat. And so presently we came to Market Deeping, the Deep Meadow mentioned by Ingulf as being granted by the monks to Hugh de Evermue, and through other indefinite little villages we sped till we reached Bourne, the town where King Edmund was crowned, and the birthplace of Hereward the Wake. To-day the home of the Wakes is but a group of grass-grown earthworks, scarcely distinguishable from the meadows which

surround them. Kingsley tells us that it was once a Roman Camp guarding the road to Sleaford. He speaks, too, of an ancient, sacred fountain which still bubbles among the ruins, if ruins they can be called, and which gave the name to Bourne. He hints at fairies and elves who had to be exorcised by the monks who came and settled beyond the castle ditch, and re-christened the fountain Peter's Pool, after the Chief of the Apostles. It was in the great house here that Hereward was born and brought up by his mother, the Lady Godiva and her husband Earl Leofric.

Bourne, too, was the home of William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, Queen Elizabeth's spirit as she used to call him. Much has been written about this Lord Burleigh. He owed his position to the Protector Somerset, who found his character exactly suited to his requirements, and created him Secretary of State. But it was under Queen Elizabeth that William Cecil attained his greatest position, and when we hear that for forty-five years he kept his seat safely in the cabinet, we shall realize what kind of man he must have been. He was, as a great historian has said, "one in whom it is difficult to discern a trace of original genius, but one who made expediency the polar star of his policy . . .; and few men have ever equalled him in the sophistry with which he could cajole, or excuse, or mislead." Those of us who have studied the real character of the great Tudor Queen, under whom he lived and flourished, will realize how exactly such a man was suited to her needs.

After leaving Bourne we travelled by the North Road, passing Folkingham, once the home of the Gaunts, to whose ancestor the Manor was given by William the Conqueror, and so reached Sleaford, where Bishop Alexander of Lincoln, surnamed the Magnificent, built himself a castle. I remember passing a curious old lighthouse somewhere about here. It was set up in the eighteenth century to guide travellers over this sparsely inhabited country, which indeed is solitary enough even now.

It is many years since I first saw Lincoln, but the same words leapt into my memory the other day as when I first caught sight of the Cathedral crowning its hill: "To Thee have I lifted up my eyes who dwellest in heaven." For indeed one has to raise one's eyes higher and higher as one nears the city to consider the mighty building; and when, after passing through the long and crowded street which leads through the lower town, one begins climbing the steep hill toward the ancient Lindum, one realizes that pilgrims to the Shrine of Saint Hugh must indeed have felt that they were about to visit one whose dwelling was on high.

In speaking of the earliest Lincoln, Camden says: "The ancient Lindum of the Britons stood on the very top of the hill, which had a very hard ascent up to it, and reached out beyond the gate called Newport, the expresse tokens of a rampier and deepe ditches which are yet very evident doe plainly shew." These rampiers or

ramparts are to be seen flanking the old Roman Gateway, which even to-day, after nearly two thousand years, bears the name of the New Port. Their grass-grown undulations serve as kitchen gardens for some of the townspeople. It was in this old upper city of Lincoln that Vortimer, the brave son of the British King Vortigern, died, poisoned by his young stepmother, Rowena, the beautiful daughter of the invading Saxon chief Hengist. With his followers Vortimer had just succeeded in driving the foes beyond the sea, when he found himself struck by death. And as he lay there he called together his British warriors and gave them commandment that his body should be buried on top of a brazen pyramid, set up at the entrance to the port where the Saxons had been accustomed to land. "For," said he, "none will dare approach the country that should but get a sight of my tomb." However, according to Camden, he was interred at Lindum or Lincoln, though no one knows the actual place of his sepulture.

Then the Saxons, when they knew that the hero was dead, returned, and destroyed the old hill city, and on the southern side of it set up a gate and fortifications, built from the huge stones of the British Lindum. And down beside the river they established a town called Wickanford.

It was to this pagan city that there arrived one day the great Paulinus, companion and friend of Augustine of Canterbury. He had the good fortune to convert the prefect of the city, whose

name was Blæcca, with all his household, and built a stone church which was considered a wonder in those days, and was dedicated to Saint Paul. That, so far as we know, was the first arrival of Christianity at Lincoln, and the memory of it has been handed down to us by Venerable Bede, who tells us that he himself met a man named Deda who had been baptized by Paulinus, and even described him with his tall figure and slight stoop, his black hair, and thin face with its birdlike nose.

After this visit of Paulinus, Lincoln began to flourish and grow, the Church of Saint Paul being its religious centre. William of Malmesbury says that at the time of the Norman conquest it was one of the best peopled cities in England, so that the Conqueror thought fit to raise one of his strong castles on the summit of the hill; while Bishop Remigius, who had come over with him from Fécamp, bought land beside the fortress, and built the first Cathedral of Lincoln. We shall meet him again, this Remy, "so little of stature and so great of heart," as Matthew Paris says, for not only shall we see traces of his work in the great west end of the Cathedral, but shall visit the traditional site of his tomb.

I think there is no one who can stand unmoved before the present west front of the Cathedral of Lincoln. When the sun is setting, and the birds wheeling and crying around the statue of Saint Hugh on the turret to the south, or settling on the horn of the swineherd of Stowe to the north,

when the shadows deepen the arches of the rich arcading, and the golden light turns the stone to opal and amethyst, how wonderful it is, how very, very wonderful and beautiful! How Remy would open his little black eyes could he see what his church has become in the course of ages. For it has needed many men and many centuries to produce this perfect building, and yet it looks as though it had grown up in a night like a flower, so harmoniously has the original scheme been developed under the one inspiration of achieving the glory of God.

Certainly that was the ruling idea of Saint Hugh of Grenoble, the Carthusian bishop who is really responsible for all that is most noble, most religious, most inspiring in this wondrous worshipping place. Never was a work more typical of its author than this Cathedral is of Saint Hugh. From the moment you come in sight of it you feel him at your side. The very shape of the pointed lancet windows suggests the singleness of purpose of the Saint whose mind was ever soaring upward to Heaven. The marvellous double arcading of the transepts tells of one for whom no detail was ever insignificant enough to permit inferior work. Even the inner sides of the leaf mouldings, which no human eye could ever examine, must be perfect to satisfy one whose most secret thought was pure and holy as his public speech. And there is the rich magnificence of the west end and the nave, suggesting the stately grandeur of the great saint of Lincoln, who feared neither man

nor devil; and the stern beauty of the choir, typical of his utter humility when he knelt in the presence of his God. . . .

All this may seem very fanciful and unnecessary, but I have just been reading for the last of many times "The French Life of Saint Hugh," translated by Herbert Thurston. When one has finished it one lays it down with a sigh, and a vision of a white-robed Carthusian monk stands looking down at one with great, dark, searching yet kindly eyes, and a mouth firm yet very tender. And the face looks out from the white cowl with the all-comprehending benevolence of one who dwells so continually in the presence of God, that, stern and unbending as he is to himself, he cannot but be forbearing with the failings of others.

Hugh of Grenoble, Bishop of Lincoln, was born in the Castle of Avalon in Burgundy in 1140. He was the youngest of three boys, and only eight when his mother died. The father, who must have been a good deal older than his wife, was so broken down by his loss, that, having placed his estates in trust for his elder sons, he took the little Hugh and together they entered a house of the Order of the Canons Regular. Many are the charming stories told of the life of the young boy among the monks of Villard-Benoit. There can be no doubt that from the first he possessed some peculiar charm, which attracted all with whom he came in contact. Certainly as a child he was the darling of the monastery, and we can see the little fellow in his white cassock and surplice,

wrapped in his black cope trotting along beside the old Canon, to whose charge he was entrusted upon his reception into the community. Saint Hugh has himself left us a picture of this dear old man: "There was one distinguished above all others by his virtue and learning. With fatherly caresses and wise counsel he endeavoured to keep me occupied and interested in ever-varied studies. 'My dear little Hugh,' he would say, 'my dear little Hugh, it is for Jesus Christ and His service that I am educating you.' If the boy cried, he would cry also. 'Do not weep, my son,' he would say, 'do not make an old man weep!'" And so, educated by love, and surrounded by affection, the child developed day by day.

When he was fifteen his father, grown sick and helpless, was placed in his sole charge; and when at length the old man died in the arms of his son, Hugh's desolate heart opened wide to embrace every form of suffering. There never was any man more tender than the future Bishop of Lincoln. When one begins to speak of him one never knows where to stop. We follow him through the days when the Canons discovered his gift of preaching, and sent him back into his own country near Avalon to act as parish priest for awhile, and thus become better acquainted with the needs of the suffering world. And there was the day when he followed the example of that other great Canon Regular, Saint Bruno, and for ten years retired from the world, together with his beloved old master, and lived a life of heavenly

contemplation and prayer in the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse which had lately been founded in the mountains above Grenoble.

It was there that the messengers of Henry II. sought him, begging him to return with them to England, and become Prior of the Carthusian monastery which the King had founded at Witham.

The house had not proved a success so far. The poor monks had been living in wretched huts in the forest, and the Prior, Dom Norbert, having broken down completely, had returned to the Grande Chartreuse. It seemed a forlorn hope, and even Hugh at first begged to be left where he was. But his fame had spread abroad, and had reached the ears of Henry, and when Hugh's own Bishop commanded him to depart, he set off in his cheerful fashion to become the one holy influence in the life of that strange contradictory character Henry Plantagenet. For the humble-minded, self-effacing monk seems to have been able to turn the vain, selfish, passionate murderer of Saint Thomas of Canterbury round his little finger. Whether it was due to his personal charm, his utter fearlessness, his European reputation, his gentle, patient, persistent manner, or the reverence due to his great learning we do not know. But Henry seems to have been powerless to resist him. In the National Gallery there is the picture of a monk in a white cowl supposed to represent Saint Hugh of Lincoln. It is the purest, most lovable, yet powerful and determined

face I have ever seen, and if it does represent the Bishop, it is no wonder that poor erring unhappy Henry lowered his eyes before that gaze, and granted Hugh whatever he asked. And so the Monastery of Witham became a great religious house, and a centre of prosperity and comfort for all the neighbouring poor.

Some of the most charming stories told of Saint Hugh are those relating to his fondness for birds, beasts, and especially for little children. While at the Grande Chartreuse the swallows and squirrels had been his pets, crowding round him with cries of delight whenever he appeared out of doors, settling on his shoulders, and feeding from his hands. At Witham we are told a goose fell under his charm, never leaving him save when she was hatching, and bringing her young to him as soon as they were out. After he became bishop he had at his manor of Stow a swan, a huge savage creature which would suffer none to approach her save Saint Hugh. With him however she was not only tame, but most affectionate, feeding from his hand, caressing him, guarding him during his repose, driving away all who tried to approach the sleeping man. For fifteen years this friendship continued, the bird always foretelling when her master was expected at Stow, by flapping her wings, and uttering cries of joy. . . .

But it was the little children whom the Saint loved best of all. There is a story of a tiny baby laughing and crowing with delight at the very sight of him. "He stretched out his little arms

and turned his head from side to side, clasping the Bishop's hands and putting them to his lips."

And Saint Hugh himself tells of a baby nephew who was brought to his bedside by the nurse, and how "the dear little creature seemed to beam all over, and went into transports of delight." Is it surprising that one who so loved and attracted the babies should have captivated the heart of the lonely old monarch?

This Bishop of Lincoln was generally surrounded by a crowd of little boys whom he had adopted, educated, and brought up in his house. One in particular seems to have been a great favourite, having been given to him by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who bought him from his wretched parents. As we wander about the Cathedral we fancy we see the holy man, followed by his train of adopted little ones, passing on to them the affection which had been so freely lavished on himself by the old Canon Regular, his master, and can hear him using the very same words which were once used to him: "Dear little ones, it is for Jesus Christ and His service that I am educating you."

Lepers, too, seem to have had a claim on the sympathy and charity of Saint Hugh, who used to bring them into his own room and wash and kiss their sores. Matthew Paris has left an account of his doings in this respect. "The holy man," says he, "was accustomed to visit lepers, whose houses lay on his way. He would embrace them, however hideous their wounds rendered them, and

upon leaving would give them abundance of alms. On one occasion William his chancellor, wishing to discover whether pride had not taken hold of the soul of the Bishop, said to him :—

"Martin cured a leper by embracing him. You never cure the lepers whom you embrace!" And the Bishop answered immediately, "The kiss of Martin cured the flesh of a leper, but the kiss of a leper cures my soul."

The poor dead, too, were a special object of Saint Hugh's charity, and he is said to have given up dining with the King, in order to shroud and inter some unfortunate wretch whose body he had found lying in the road.

For fourteen years Saint Hugh continued Bishop of Lincoln, loved and adored by high and low. During this time a large portion of the present cathedral was rebuilt from the heap of ruins into which it had been cast by an earthquake just before the Saint's arrival. And now the time was approaching when the Bishop would be called from this world. But before the summons came he went back for a visit to his old home at the Grande Chartreuse, and it was on his return, while he was still in London, that he was seized with quartan ague. His old friend Henry II. was dead, and so was his successor Richard. But John came to visit him and made great promises of reform, which, alas, he never kept. Day by day the Bishop's sickness increased, yet in spite of his sufferings he never complained, and refused to allow them to remove the hair

shirt he had always worn, or in any way to change his ascetic mode of life. And when at last he felt death close upon him, he bade the monks make a cross of ashes on the ground, and lay him thereon, that he might die even as his Lord and Master had died, upon a cross.

"Oh Merciful Saviour, give me rest! Give me rest!" he prayed, and just as the clergy were singing the words, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace," he breathed his last.

They say that the candles which were carried before the body on its journey to Lincoln burned for four days and nights, though the rain fell in torrents, and the wind did its best to extinguish them.

When the body arrived at Lincoln it was met by King John of England and King William of Scotland, together with three archbishops, thirteen bishops, and counts, barons and lords innumerable. Even the Jews came to bewail this merciful man, who had done his utmost to shelter them from the storm of hatred with which their riches had caused them to be overwhelmed. And the two kings, aided by the chief of the nobles, carried the bier on their shoulders to the beautiful west door of the Cathedral, where it was received by the clergy and taken up into the choir, the choir whose very stones the dead Bishop had helped to carry, and which to this day I should fancy no one can ever enter without thinking of him. There they passed the night around the Bishop, who, according to his wish, had been re-

clothed in the same simple vestments he had worn at Westminster for his consecration. And though he had now been many days dead, his flesh was fair and white, and his cheeks glowed like the rose, so that he looked as though he were asleep. And rich and poor came flocking in together, to kiss the hands and feet of the father they had loved, who had always been so ready to succour the needy and suffering.

"And while he was thus lying came a knight, whose arm was eaten to the bone by a terrible ulcer, and he laid it weeping beside the body of the Bishop, and the ghastly hole began to close, the wound to heal, and the skin to cover it, and the knight, giving thanks to God and the holy Bishop, came and shewed the wonder to the Dean."

Then, the news spreading, other cures were wrought. And after the watching was over they laid the body near the altar of Saint John Baptist, in "the new church which Hugh himself had raised in honour of Mary the Mother of God."

Eighty years later Edward I. and his Queen, Eleanor of Castile, together with their children, and a great concourse of bishops, abbots, lords, and ladies, assembled at Lincoln, for the purpose of removing the body of Saint Hugh to the magnificent reliquary which had been prepared for it in the Angel Choir, for which the great and good Robert Grossteste was chiefly responsible. But both body and reliquary have long since disappeared, and the head, which was kept in a separate

case, was stolen in 1364 for the sake of the rich jewels which ornamented its covering. The robbers flung the skull itself into a field, where it was watched over by a raven till some one found it and restored it to the Cathedral. Two centuries later the shrine itself, together with all the treasures of the church, fell into the hands of that most rapacious of robbers, Henry VIII., and the bones of Saint Hugh disappeared for ever.

Let us walk round the Cathedral, trying to fancy ourselves back in the days and circumstances for which each portion was intended. And first, as we enter the great door, we shall find on our right an Early English chapel called Saint Hugh's. On its walls were painted the names of the "Company of Ringers of Our Blessed Virgin Mary of Lincoln." I do not know whether these men formed part of the great association founded by Saint Hugh, and known as the Guild of Saint Mary of Lincoln. It was due to this latter Society that the funds were so generously contributed for the building of the greater part of this splendid church we are visiting. Their official place of meeting was what is now known as John of Gaunt's Stables.

As we begin walking up the nave we think of Bishop Hugh of Wells who built it, and picture him over at Melun, being consecrated Bishop by his friend, Stephen Langton, the exiled Archbishop of Canterbury. These aisles, which were later added to his nave, are furnished with a beautiful arcading, beneath whose arches one

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

SOUTH DOOR

may sit on the stone bench on which the little pillars rest so gracefully, and call to mind the crowds of pilgrims who in former days came thronging to the Shrine of Saint Hugh. For it was on this bench that the sick, the aged, and infirm used to rest till their turn came to pass up into the Angel Choir, thus giving rise to the saying, "The weak go to the wall." As we pass eastward we notice the Norman font which probably dates back to the days of Remy of Fécamp, and the beautiful triforium, and we think of those nights when the monks walked round the church in procession, bearing lighted candles and singing litanies. The galleries are empty now and useless, save to break the monotony of the lofty walls with their beautiful groups of arches.

Presently we reach the south transept, and stand wondering at the delicate work which was lavished upon the double arcading that runs round the walls. Once more we shall notice that it is Saint Hugh who is responsible for it, Saint Hugh who suffered nothing but perfection to be placed in this abode of All Perfection. There is in this transept a lovely little canopied hearth, and piercing the wall that most beautiful rose window, the tracery of which has been well compared to the ribbing of leaves. And so, leaving on the west the Galilee with its restrained beauty, we pass under a decorated doorway to find ourselves in the south choir aisle, standing before the ruined shrine of Little Saint Hugh, the Child

Martyr of Lincoln, said to have been crucified by the Jews in 1255.

The story runs that the little boy, who was nine years of age, was playing with some Jewish children on what is called Steep Hill, once the Ghetto of Lincoln, when he was beguiled by one Copin into that ancient building still known as the Jew's House, and hidden away in a dark cellar. There he was given just sufficient food to keep him alive, and for twenty-seven days was tortured by Jews who had been called together for the purpose. He was beaten with rods till the blood flowed, and his little body was livid and covered with wounds. He was crowned with thorns, spat upon, pricked with knives, made to drink gall. And all the time his enemies who had come secretly from many parts of England, mocked him, called him Jesus the false prophet. Finally they crucified him, and all the while the child is said to have borne his sufferings without a complaint or cry, and even to have smiled at his tormentors.

Meanwhile his mother had been searching for him high and low, till at length a neighbour told how she had seen the boy playing with the children of Copin the Jew. So his house was searched, and at the bottom of the well was found the little body. It is said that no sooner had the corpse been raised from its place of concealment than miracles began to take place; and this coming to the ears of the Cathedral Chapter, they went in solemn procession and bore away

the little body to the Cathedral. They buried it as I have said against the inner wall of the south choir aisle, where you may still see the remains of the shrine. When this tomb was opened in the nineteenth century the skeleton of a little child was found, and on the bones of the feet those who were present thought that they could still distinguish the marks of the nails with which he had been crucified.

> "O yonge Hugh of Lincoln slain also
> With cursed Jewes as it is notable,
> For it nis but a litel whyle ago,
> Pray eek for us, we sinful folk unstable,
> That of his mercy God so merciable
> On us his grete mercy multiplye
> For reverence of his moder Marye."

The murder of Little Saint Hugh was the signal for a general persecution of the Jews, who as I have said were hated and envied because of their great wealth. One especially, whose house stood a little farther up Steep Hill, was the notorious Aaron of Lincoln who financed the great Abbey of Saint Alban's, and even the King himself. Every Jew in the thirteenth century was actually the property of the King, AU REY KI SERF IL EST. He became so from his birth. All he possessed, even his wife and children, belonged to his master, and he could only live in one of the royal boroughs. He wore two squares of yellow felt on his breast to mark his race, and could neither keep servants nor marry a Christian. But he made piles of money, for in those days

Christians believed that it was unlawful to lend money on interest, so the Jews who had no such scruples became more and more powerful. When money was required for foreign wars or crusades, their trade became enormous, so that the King had to take them under his special protection, and provided offices with trebly locked coffers where they might keep their bonds and securities in safety.

Edward I. seems to have dealt more fairly with the Jews than his ancestors, insisting on their being tried by a jury half of whom should be Israelites. But the people in general regarded all Jews with especial contempt and hatred, and stories such as that of the murder of Little Saint Hugh of Lincoln, William of Norwich, Robert of Bury, and the rest of the alleged Child Martyrs, no doubt lost nothing in the telling, though considering the brutal manners of the times, and the treatment the Jews had received from their persecutors, there may well be truth in them. But to Christians at large, their unshakable adherence to their traditional religion was sufficient guarantee that they approved of their ancestors' crime of crucifying Our Lord, and that they would do, and even were in the habit of doing, such deeds again when they had the chance. In 1287 all the Jews were seized and cast into prison, where they were kept till they had paid the King twelve thousand pounds, an enormous sum in those days. Three years later, urged by his people, Edward I. expelled them from his

kingdom, and over sixteen thousand were thus sent into exile.

Farther along the south choir aisle we shall come upon the tomb of Catherine Swinford, the handsome governess of the daughters of John of Gaunt, and later, when he had grown old and helpless, his Duchess. I have read somewhere that when this unscrupulous woman found that the Duke was dying, she made off with everything she could lay her hands upon, and left him to the mercy of any one who would take pity on him. Close to her lies her daughter, Joan Beaufort, Countess of Westmorland. Next we pass the south-eastern transept with its vestries, and semicircular chapels, dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Paul. And then we emerge into the Angel Choir and find ourselves indeed in the presence of the mighty dead. Here, just behind the high altar, stood the shrine of Saint Hugh, for whom this beautiful building was erected.

For the wonder of wonders in Lincoln is the Angel Choir, so named from the angels who decorate the spandrils of the triforium arches. After the stern restrained beauty of Saint Hugh's choir this exquisite building is almost intoxicatingly lovely. It brings to one's mind those dreams of fairyland which, as we read, haunted the fancy of some of the monks of old. It is so light, so ornate, so rich in its detail, so adorably, incredibly perfect, that the first thought which strikes us as our eyes begin to wander over it, is the intense enjoyment its creation must have

given to its creators, Bishop Henry of Lexington and his successor. Whether however it formed a fitting resting-place for the ascetic Hugh of Avalon, is a question which cannot but strike one when comparing the studied simplicity of his own work with the exuberant ornamentation of this structure. Yet it was here they laid the beloved body, and no doubt as Saint Hugh looked down upon it from his home on high, he realized and appreciated all the pains and devotion which had been expended to do him honour.

I have often wondered how sufficient labour was obtained for the building and beautifying of these great cathedrals. Of course there were the monks themselves who spent their whole lives on the work. We have seen how, quite lately, the little Benedictine community at Buckfast has raised, without any paid labour, the beautiful church in which they now worship. But in the twelfth century there were helpers of another sort, for religion was such a living force in those days, that the news of the building of a cathedral "called out an army of eager helpers," or so we read in the life of Saint Hugh, "who marched to their labours as the Crusaders marched to battle." An Archbishop of Rouen, writing about this time, says that these voluntary labourers admitted no one to their ranks who had not first made their confession and received Holy Communion, and were in perfect love and charity with all their neighbours. No work was too

rough or hard for them. They even harnessed themselves to the carts, so saving the expense of horses. Having chosen a leader, they would gather on the spot where the church was to be erected, and fencing in a camp with their waggons after the fashion of our migrating ancestors, they would spend their nights in prayer and the singing of canticles, and their days in helping forward the work upon which their hearts were set. No wonder that churches arose in incredibly short periods, or that work given thus gladly for the glory of God should have proved so much more durable and beautiful than that produced by the paid labour of to-day.

Beneath the east window of the Angel Choir was buried the urn containing the viscera of Eleanor of Castile, the beautiful and much loved wife of King Edward I. Her tomb with an effigy (not that originally placed there by her husband which was of gilded bronze) stands a little to the south of the grave. The King was on his way to Scotland when he heard of her sudden illness, and hastened to Hardeby where she was lying. He arrived too late, and it is said that his grief was terrible, for there have been few happier marriages among kings and queens than that of the handsome Edward Longshanks with the little Spanish princess. Indeed, she was surnamed The Faithful, so great was her devotion to this giant husband of hers. She even left her baby sons in England to follow him to the Holy Land, where among all the tumult of war

she remained beside him, and even bore him a daughter. And now she lay dead, and no doubt as he looked down at her he thought of the many ways in which he might have made her life happier and easier, for though she had been such a perfect wife, and had brought him fifteen children, he had not always been quite as faithful to her as he might have been. He gave her a grand funeral, for he had her embalmed, and carried to London to be laid beneath another beautiful monument in Westminster Abbey: while at every spot where her body rested, a cross was set up where preaching might be heard, and alms given to the needy from funds left for that purpose by her sorrowing husband.

In the Angel Choir of Lincoln, too, we shall find the tomb of Bishop Flemming, one of those repellent chantries where, below the slab on which his robed effigy is laid, is seen his dead body all too realistically depicted. It was Bishop Flemming who founded Lincoln College, Oxford.

And there is the great Bartholemew Burghersh, the *Preux Chevalier*, who fought at the side of the young Black Prince at the battle of Creçy, and at Poictiers, and behaved so nobly to Sir Henri de Vaulx. As we stand beside his tomb upon which he is represented clothed in armour, his head, with its long hair, resting on his helmet, and his feet on a lion, while two angels bear up his soul praying to heaven, we should remember Froissart's story of this great soldier, for indeed it is very pathetic that these noble people should

be forgotten. It seems that on one occasion during the wars in France, Sir Bartholemew and his followers were lodged near the village of Cormiçy, where the Archbishop of Rheims had a very strong castle, which had been put into the charge of Sir Henri de Vaulx to guard against the dreaded English. Now the very fact that the castle was supposed to be impregnable no doubt roused the ambition of Sir Bartholemew, who having considered the building from all sides came to the conclusion that the best way to capture it, would be to undermine the great square tower which was its chief defence, and in which the defenders were all assembled. This was therefore done, the miners propping up their work with wooden posts as they went forward. And when all was ready, and the knight saw for himself that the tower had practically no foundation left save wooden pillars, he mounted his horse and riding up to the castle made a signal that he wished to parley with those within. Then came forward Sir Henri de Vaulx in his black armour, with his shield bearing five silver almonds on a sable ground, and asked the English knight what he wanted.

"I wish you to surrender," replied Lord Burghersh, "otherwise you will all be destroyed."

"Indeed," replied Sir Henri, laughing. "And may I ask how you propose to destroy us? We have plenty of food and water, and it is impossible to take the tower."

"If you will come out, on my assurance of your

safety, I will show you how," replied the knight, and he took him to the mine, showing him how the great tower was only supported on posts of wood. Then Sir Henri's face fell at the sight, and he told the English knight that he was a very gallant and noble gentleman, and surrendered himself to him, together with all the garrison.

And as soon as every one had left the castle the mine was fired, the tower broke in two, and both portions in falling fortunately just missed Sir Bartholemew, who was standing near by waiting for the explosion. It was in such ways that knights like Sir Bartholemew Burghersh amused themselves, and made the name of England to be feared, only I am afraid it was not always that they acted in so generous a manner.

The tomb of the knight's brother, Bishop Henry, stands close by. He also is represented with long hair like his brother. It was he who, as Bishop of Lincoln, baptized Edward the Black Prince, no doubt in the ancient Norman font which still stands in the nave of the Cathedral. This was in the year 1330, probably during the four days when the King was staying with the Bishop in the Episcopal Palace. Bishop Burghersh had been a very unfaithful subject to Edward II., but was in great favour with the young king, Edward III., who granted him the right of sanctuary to all persons claiming it at his house.

It is said that the Bishop had a passion for

hunting, and took much land from the poor to form a park, which made him not only very unpopular, but so restless and unhappy after his death, that he haunted the neighbourhood in a coat of Lincoln Green, with a horn slung round his neck, carrying a bow and arrows. In this very unclerical guise he used to appear to the canons of Lincoln, begging them to restore the land to its original owners, as otherwise he should never get any rest.

There are many, many more whom we should like to remember at Lincoln, Bishop Russell, and Bishop John Longland who built the beautiful chantries on either side of the south door leading to the Angel Choir.

The consecration of the latter chapel was prevented by the coming of the Reformation, and it is now used as the music library of the Cathedral.

There is one bishop, however, whose monument we shall not find in the Cathedral, but who was one of the greatest churchmen who ever ruled there. Robert Grossteste was a poor boy of Lincoln, who by his intelligence and eagerness to learn attracted the notice of the Mayor, who educated him and sent him to Oxford. There he quickly made a name for himself by his lecturing and writings, so that Roger Bacon declared him to be "perfect in divine and human knowledge," a great compliment from the celebrated Franciscan philosopher. On Grossteste's return to Lincoln he became the protégé of

the Bishop, Hugh of Wells, who made him a canon, and fought his battles with the other clergy who despised and resented him because of his humble birth. However, his talents were far too great to be set aside, and on the death of his friend the Bishop, Robert Grossteste was appointed in his place.

There can be no doubt that the affairs of the Church in England at that time were in great need of reform, and Robert Grossteste was a born reformer.

He feared neither Pope, King, nor even his own Clergy. He came into conflict with the first on account of the foreign priests who were being nominated to livings in his diocese. With the second because he would give appointments only to earnest and godly men. With the clergy because his standard of life and religion was higher than they could comfortably reach. But he was a magnificent bishop, and little by little not only gained the respect and admiration of Pope Innocent IV., but, as Lingard says with sly sarcasm, "The honour of being reviled by the historian of Saint Alban's" (Matthew Paris).

On our way to visit the Chapter House we shall certainly pause to wonder at the beauty of the Easter Sepulchre, which is built against the north wall of Saint Hugh's choir. It consists of six bays, the three to the west enclosing a chapel evidently intended to act as the Tomb for the Blessed Sacrament in the latter part of

Holy Week, since on the stone below the arches there are sculptured the three sleeping guardians of the sepulchre. The eastern part is known as the tomb of Bishop Remigius, but has only been so called since the Reformation.

And there are the cloisters to visit, and the Chapter House with its giant stone palm tree rising in the centre, whose fronds as they near the roof open, spread, interlace with the leaves of the smaller palms which stand between the windows, and so form the perfect vault which replaces the old wooden ceiling of earlier days. The windows themselves tell the story of the Cathedral from the giving of the Charter to Bishop Remigius by William the Conqueror. There you will see the building of the first church, the outbreak of the great fire which destroyed the wooden roof in 1195, the history of Saint Hugh. . . . It is all pictured in the painted glass of the great triple lights of the Chapter House. And there is the great carved wooden chair in which Edward I. sat when he held his Parliament in 1301.

Before we leave Lincoln, I feel that we must visit, if only for a moment or two, the old feudal castle, which with the Cathedral shares the summit of the hill. We shall find many things to interest us, beginning with the ancient gateway by which we enter. It was through this entrance, on Christmas Day, 1141, during the stirring days of King Stephen, that Earl Ranulf and his brother-in-law, William de Romare, the

rascally sons of the Countess of Lincoln, entered the castle. They had arrived at Lincoln with their wives, and finding the garrison abroad in the town enjoying their Christmas festivities, the two ladies sauntered in through the gateway, just as we did the other day, and began talking and joking with the custodian. Presently, beneath the archway, comes Ranulf apparently looking for his wife, and finding no one about but the ladies, bars the gate, and traitor that he is, takes possession of the fortress for the Empress Maud, though at that time he was professing allegiance to King Stephen. From the summit of the old Observatory Tower we may look down, as no doubt the young Countess did, and watch the army of the King gathering around the foot of the hill, and even turning the western end of the Cathedral into a fortress, from which to attack the castle. As we stand on the ruined summit of the tower, among the grass and brambles which now clothe its ancient stones, a winter evening seems to close down upon us and we see some one creeping along the river bank, and a horse neighs and is quickly silenced. It is Earl Ranulf gone to seek succour from his father-in-law, the great Earl of Gloucester, brother of the Empress Maud. A few days later he returned, with his hastily gathered army, to find the floods out around Lincoln, and the river so swift and fierce that no one dared cross it, till Robert of Gloucester himself, who had sworn either to conquer Stephen or die, waded

into the stream and, followed by his men, made his way to the opposite bank.

There they came upon the King, with his bodyguard drawn up beneath his standard, wielding his mighty battle-axe, gloomy with the memory of the portent he had witnessed that morning in the Cathedral during Mass. For the chain supporting the pyx, in which in those days the Blessed Sacrament was kept hanging above the altar, had snapped and let fall its precious burden.

They say that Stephen fought like a lion until, his axe shattered, his sword broken, he was overcome and led away a prisoner. Then up the steep street and into the city the Earl's troops made their way, cutting down all who opposed them, and slaughtering the helpless citizens. It was not a happy thing to live in England in the days of the Empress Maud and King Stephen!

As we descend from Observatory Tower, we can look right down into the walled yards of the old prison which stands within the castle enclosure. It is disused now, and the doors stand open. But no doubt, at night, these grinning heads of gargoyles we are passing on our descent, watch the ghosts of poor wretches walking up and down in the moonlight, counting fearfully the days till they will be taken over to Cobb Hall to be hanged on the summit of the tower.

We climbed to it presently, up the terraces of ancient earthworks, now carpeted with velvet

grass, and gay with flowers. We entered the gloomy circular tower with its inner buttresses, and narrow loopholes, and looked down through the trap door leading to the still more gloomy vault below, where no doubt condemned prisoners spent their last night. And we mounted to the roof where are still to be seen the rings and bolts to which the gallows were fixed; and as we stood looking down over the fair country below, we were able to realize something of the feelings of the many victims whose eyes have flown over the intervening space to the great Cathedral, a moment before the bandage hid it from their eyes for ever.

And then we crossed the castle yard to the Lucy Tower, and all that is left of the Keep, which, with its dungeons, its guard rooms, its halls, and sleeping chambers, was once the home of the gallant old Lady Nichola, to whom King John gave the guardianship of his Castle of Lincoln. We mount to it by a long flight of steps, for these ancient Norman towers were not entered from the ground-floor. Presently we find ourselves shut in by gloomy walls, and in the centre of the grass grown enclosure stands a huge tree covering the whole vast circle with its green boughs.

I was walking across to join my husband who was a little in front, when I stumbled over something, and looking down saw a little stone set up among the grass. There were letters on it—P. B. Dec. 28, 1868. Then as I turned to go

on again I saw another, and beyond, a row, all alike, and suddenly realized that they were the head-stones of graves.

My husband who had been reading a pamphlet he had picked up returned and took my arm. "Come," said he, "it is time to go."

"But these gravestones, are they graves? this one, for instance, P. B., what does it mean?" "She was executed on the roof of Cobb Court for poisoning her husband. These are the graves of murderers, the grass is full of them."

As we passed the trunk of the great tree on our way out of the horrible place, I looked up among its branches, and thought what scenes it had witnessed. And though it appeared an innocent sycamore, to me it will always remain the Upas Tree feeding on the bodies of the dead it shelters.

As we passed once more out under the ancient gateway of the castle enclosure, the heads of Edward I. and his Queen Eleanor looked down upon us, while on the other side, William the Norman and Blessed Saint Hugh kept guard. And we went and bought photographs, and packed our bags, and fed Elizabeth, and ate our lunch at the White Hart, most stately and ecclesiastical of hostels, served by a head waiter who only needed vestments and a mitre to convince one that he was the reincarnation of Alexander the Magnificent, doomed for his pride to serve two humble pilgrims to his old Cathedral. And very well he served us, and what a cook he

kept! No wonder kings and nobles liked to sit at his table in the Bishop's palace! And after it was over he humbled himself still more, for he helped me on with my coat, and held a light to my husband's cigarette. And so, refreshed and comforted, we started off on our way to York.

IV

YORK

Our road, after leading past the Lincoln race-course, ran through the broad valley of the Witham and the Trent, of which rivers Camden remarks, translating from the Latin of a still older writer:

> "The Trent unto thee sendeth fish, oh Lincoln, well we see
> Yet little Witham, scorn it not, a riveret comes to thee."

A little later we find ourselves crossing the Fosse Dyke, which King Henry had "cast and scoured for seven miles in length from Witham into Trent, that it might serve the citizens of Lincoln for carriage of necessaries by water." And here we come upon Torksey Lock, the inhabitants of which were granted many privileges in the days of William the Conqueror, on condition that they conveyed the King's ambassadors who travelled that way as far as York. There are the ruins of a castle at Torksey, but whose we had no time to discover. And so we ran past the ancient Norman church of Marton, and Naith the home of the Darceys, who flourished under King Henry III., to Gainsborough.

It was at Gainsborough that Sweyn, King of the Danes, that "most odious tyrant," as Roger of Wendover calls him, put his ships to anchor in the Trent, and leaving there his son Cnut, sallied forth to lay waste the provinces. Camden tells us that it was at Gainsborough the murderous ruffian met his death from an unknown hand, but an older writer places it at Bury, where, after unheard-of atrocities, Sweyn yelled out that Saint Edmund was no saint! and was immediately pierced by a mysterious arrow, "and departed for Hell on the third of February."

At Thorne we found a fine twelfth century church where a wedding was in progress, and soon after reached Selby where a great delight awaited us in the magnificent Abbey Church. It was quite by accident that we stopped at all, for I am ashamed to say that I had never heard of the wonders of Selby, or its monastic church; and this is the more strange as Saint Germanus of Auxerre, to whom it owed its foundation, has for many years been one of my most intimate friends! The story is so curious, that even at the risk of delaying our arrival at York, it must be told at some length.

Germanus was, as all the world knows, or knew when the saints were still honoured in our land, the soldier bishop of Auxerre, who at the command of Pope Saint Celestine, saved the Faith in Britain when, during the fifth century, it was so perilously threatened by Pelagius and his disciple Agricola. Germanus came over to our

shores with his friend Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, stilling by his prayers the storm, which, Bede says, had been sent against them by "the malevolent force of the demons who grudged that such great men should proceed to recover the salvation of the people."

On their coming, having first crushed the "damnable heresy," they visited the tomb of Saint Alban, the young Roman Christian, who, a century earlier, had laid down his life for the same Faith for which they were now contending. Then, hearing that the Picts and Scots had once more overrun the north of Britain, and were laying it waste with fire and sword, the old martial spirit of Germanus awoke: for he had been a soldier before he was a bishop. Hastening to the scene of the disturbance, he gathered together an army of peasants, whom he proceeded to convert, and baptize, and it being the season of Easter, there was a great festival in the little church which had been hastily built. After which Germanus, declaring himself the leader of this army of new and enthusiastic Christians, mounted his horse, and with the thrice repeated cry of ALLELUIA, charged the enemy.

No wonder the wild savages were stricken down with terror, cast away their weapons and took to their heels. Doubtless they mistook the Bishop, his armour veiled by his splendid Easter vestments, and bearing the Standard of his Risen Lord, surrounded moreover as he was by his vast white-robed company of Neo-

phytes, for some mighty god, and his band of avenging angels. In any case, we are told that they cast down their arms and fled howling and shrieking toward the river, into which those who were not slaughtered by the British plunged and were drowned.

But you will be wondering what this old fifth century story has to do with the founding of Selby Abbey. To understand that we must skip nearly six hundred years and in fancy travel to Auxerre, the beautiful little town in Eastern France, to which I motored some years ago, when visiting the French châteaux, and where I first formed a friendship with this splendid though somewhat bellicose Bishop. There, in the Abbey of Saint Germanus, we shall find a young monk named Benedict lying in his cell one night, sorely troubled in mind, having just received a ghostly visit from the ancient founder of his abbey.

We must remember that the north of England was then still in a very wild and uncivilized state; for the Danes and other Northmen had overrun it, blotting out most of the religion that the earlier saints, including Saint Germanus, had taught. They had destroyed the monasteries, murdering the monks and nuns, the only teachers and protectors the people had in those days. So it is not perhaps too fanciful to imagine that the good Bishop, who, during his earthly life, had taken so strong an interest in the conversion and well-being of the people of England, and

had twice journeyed hither to teach them the true faith, should have risen from his grave to urge this new missionary to help them in their need. For that was what his visit to Benedict meant. He ordered the young man to make his way to a place in England called Salebei, there to found a monastery which was to be dedicated to himself the Saint of Auxerre; and in order to give the monk courage for such an enterprise, he bade him take with him the sacred relic of his little finger, which lay night and day upon his altar in the great church. After much hesitation, and fearing that the vision might be a temptation of the devil, we see the young man stealing off with his treasure, and after much vain searching, and loss of time, necessitating a second visit from the Saint, finding the very place chosen for the abbey. So Benedict, and the little band of monks whom he gathered around him, planted their Cross among the grasses of the meadow on the banks of the Ouse, and built a little wooden church, and moss-lined huts for themselves to dwell in, and began their evangelistic labours.

One day, down the river in his barge, came a great baron called Hugh. The sight of the little community roused his curiosity. So landing he came and inquired the meaning of it all, and before he left sent for workmen to build a better church and house for the monks. But that was not all. For this was the eleventh century, the Normans were ruling the land, and, as we

know, William of Normandy fully appreciated the civilizing influence of the monks and nuns upon his rude northern subjects. So when Hugh, who was a friend of his, told him of his find, the King was greatly interested, and immediately gave money and land for raising a monastery at Selby. And so great was his enthusiasm for this his earliest northern abbey, that he and his Queen Matilda, when travelling through Yorkshire a little later, put up at the new house, and it was there that Henry their youngest son, afterwards Henry I., was born. After this it was but natural that Selby should flourish, till, as Camden tells us, "the Abbats of this monastery, and those of Saint Mary's at York, were the only Abbats in the north of England that had place in the Parliament House."

We were looking round the magnificent building with its Norman nave and richly decorated choir, when we were accosted by a verger who proceeded to point out the various beauties in detail, the lovely triforium, the curious monkish figures carved on some of the brackets, the three swans the arms of the ancient abbey, the beautiful stone screen dividing the chancel from the Lady Chapel, the modern reredos carved at Oberammergau by Peter Rendel, the wonderful east window, and that other window of the Washington family where the Stars and Stripes were blazoned in olden times. And, perhaps most interesting of all, the ancient Norman font,

YORK CATHEDRAL—WEST FRONT.

in which for nearly a thousand years the inhabitants of Selby have been baptized. Finally, he took us up to the muniment room, and showed us a very interesting old book, in the company of which he left us for awhile, and where I found many of the details of the story I have just related. And so, with many a wish that we could have stayed longer, we set off once more on our journey to York.

What a crowded city it seems to-day, this Eboracum of the Romans; or, as Geoffrey of Monmouth calls it in his British History, Kaer Ebraucus, so named from its amazing giant ruler, who, so we are told, ruled Britain for forty years from this city now known as York, where he dwelt with his twenty wives and fifty children. According to the same most delightful, and surely, credulous, of chroniclers, Ebraucus and his immediate successors flourished just at the time when Solomon, whom he seems somewhat to have resembled in his matrimonial arrangements, was building the Temple at Jerusalem; and it was to Ebraucus and his sons that we owe the foundation of most of the ancient cities of Britain. One of them was King Lear, hero of Shakespere's great drama. But indeed we know little or nothing of Northern Britain in those remote times.

When Agricola arrived from Rome in the first century after the birth of Our Lord, he probably found little more than a collection of wooden buildings, fenced in by trenches and ramparts

of earth. Some people would have us believe that even in those days there was a Christian worshipping place at York. In any case something of the kind would surely soon have arisen, for among the soldiers and domestic slaves brought over by the heathen general and his officers, there would almost certainly be some followers of the New Religion which Saint Peter and Saint Paul had been spreading abroad so vigorously in the city of Rome, and for which they had just laid down their lives.

About a century later we find Severus, the Roman Emperor in York, worshipping the Goddess of War, Bellona, and offering sacrifices in the great temple which stood within the city. Now it is known that the Roman camp lay over, or very near the site of the present Minster, on the east side of the river ; and near the south gate there is said to have been erected somewhat later a Christian church dedicated to the Holy Cross, perhaps founded by Saint Helen after her conversion, and the discovery of the Great Relic.

For we have now reached the beginning of the fourth century, when Constantine the Pale was ruling in York with his beautiful, probably British, wife Helen. It was at York that their son Constantine (afterwards surnamed the Great) is said to have been born, and on the death of his father, proclaimed emperor, " the soldiers casting the purple robe upon him while he wept and put spurs to his horse to avoid the importunity of

the army." Later came his miraculous conversion, and that of his mother Helen, and we may be sure that in his boundless enthusiasm for the new religion he had adopted, he would not forget the remote northern town in which he had first seen the light, and where his father still lay buried in that mysterious tomb, lighted by its ever burning lamp.

In the year A.D. 314 we hear of three British bishops, chief of whom was Ebor, Bishop of York, being present at the great council which Constantine had called together at Arles, so that certainly by the fourth century there must have been a considerable number of Christians in the north of England, who considered themselves part of the universal church which had its centre in Rome.

But it is not until the seventh century that we find the story of the Church in the northern capital beginning in good earnest. For when the Romans left the country the people of the north again found themselves defenceless against the outer barbarians, this time hordes of Saxons and Angles, who poured in upon them from the sea. So we hear little more of York, and nothing of its church, until the time when Edwin, that romantic young son of the Saxon Ælla, King of Northumbria, sent messengers to beg for the hand of Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert, late King of Kent, and sister of Ædbald, the reigning sovereign.

But before we go further with the charming

story of Edwin, we will enter the vast Cathedral, and making our way to one of the stately vergers who stand waiting near the choir screen, ask to be taken down to the ancient crypt, for it is there surely that the old history will best unroll itself.

It is very dark in the crypt, for I have begged our guide not to turn up all the modern electric lights, thinking that the ghosts of the past will be more likely to manifest themselves in the twilight to which they belong. And indeed the old man is only too eager to evoke them. He shows us a heap of earth, which was once a Roman altar, perhaps the same upon which Severus, and even Constantine before his conversion, offered sacrifices to Bellona. He points to the marvellous sculptured capitals of the squat Norman pillars, to the well from which he hints that the water may have been drawn for Edwin's baptism. And then taking me by the arm, for he has found by this time that I am a kindred spirit, and ready to believe anything he tells me in that mysterious gloom, he guides us to the side of the inner crypt, and shows us the herring-bone masonry of the walls, which is quite possibly the lower part of the stone church that Edwin began to build over the little wooden oratory in which he had been baptized. And all the while I can feel the young King of Northumbria at my side.

Ædbald had at first refused to let his sister marry the still pagan Edwin, saying that it was not lawful for a Christian virgin to be given to

one altogether ignorant of the True God. Thereupon Edwin promised that she should follow undisturbed her own religion, and that all her household might follow the same Faith. Moreover, he said that he fully intended to study the doctrines of the Christian Church, and if he found that they were more worthy of God than the teaching of his own religion, he would himself become a Christian. "So after a courtship long protracted, to the intent that he should not despise that woman, when possessed, whom he so ardently desired when withheld," to quote the words of William of Malmesbury, Ethelburga was given to Edwin, and went to York under the guardianship of Paulinus the bishop, friend and companion of Saint Augustine of Canterbury. It seems to have turned out a very happy marriage, yet in spite of the united efforts of the Bishop and the Queen, Edwin was unable for some time to bow his proud neck to the yoke of a crucified God! I cannot relate all the history of his conversion. There was an attempt to murder him which was frustrated by the prayers of Paulinus and the Queen, and the self-sacrifice of his friend. Close upon this came the birth of his first child, a little daughter, who, doubtless at the request of her mother, was baptized by the Bishop, on the Easter Day following her parents' marriage, and was given to Paulinus to be consecrated to the service of the Christian God as a nun. But still Edwin hesitated, though Bede tells us that he sat much by himself, thinking

and pondering over the words of Paulinus, and those of his wife. At last he promised to consult his own High Priest and nobles, and to that end called a great assembly at York, where all agreed that the religion they had hitherto followed was useless and false. So after the High Priest Coifi had himself undertaken the dreaded task of profaning and setting fire to the idols and their altars, King Edwin was baptized in the little church of Saint Peter, which he had himself built of wood while he was being instructed. As we stand in the dusky crypt on the very spot once covered by this humble oratory, looking down at the ancient well which doubtless supplied the water for the baptism, the centuries roll back indeed, and we feel beside us the beautiful young mother, Queen Ethelburga, holding two more little ones out for baptism, and all the dark recesses are filled with courtiers, and priests in rich Easter vestments, while most conspicuous of all is the tall, bent form, and dark Italian face of Paulinus.

In the midst kneels the King, in his white baptismal robe, and watching him I can see the pathetic face of old Coifi, the High Priest, who has lost all faith in his old religion, and yet cannot humble his spirit to the new. . . .

Over the little oratory was quickly erected a new church of stone, dedicated to Saint Peter. But alas, the good Edwin did not live to see it completed, for he was killed in battle against the savage Penda, and the last glimpse we have

of the crypt is as they are laying his head in its resting-place before the altar.

After this a darkness falls once more over York. The Queen and her children fled for safety with their faithful guardian Paulinus, back to the court of the Kentish King, and the little church of Saint Peter at York fell into decay. And this brings us to one of the greatest, and perhaps for that reason most criticized Bishop who ever ruled the Northern See. We have heard of Wilfrid in Sussex during one of the periods of his exile, and we shall find him again at Ripon and Hexham. When we think of him there arises before our mind's eye a tall, very handsome Saxon, with proud, imperious manner, very different from the gentle, humble Aidan his predecessor at the Abbey of Lindisfarne. For it was at Lindisfarne Saint Wilfrid had been educated and professed a monk. There is no need here to tell the story of his failure as Archbishop of York. He was a magnificent man, holy, pure, and upright. His whole heart was set on maintaining the unity of the Church. For this he laboured, and in the end lost his most cherished friends, and even his bishopric.

In England he was certainly one of the pillars of Christianity, and when later we meet him at Ripon and Hexham, a little softened and mellowed by adversity and age, I think we shall perhaps find him more easy to understand, than if we made his acquaintance here at York. He was one of the great builders, and not only gave

England Ripon, and Hexham, but rebuilt York Minster.

And there is Saint John of Beverley, who began even as a boy to preach to the poor heathen people of Yorkshire. Bede has related many wonders of this holy man. One story I remember especially. A boy was brought to him who besides having a horrible bald and scaly head, on which only a few detached bristles would grow, was also dumb. Having taken him by the chin, Bishop John made the sign of the cross on his tongue, and told him to say the word GAE, which he did. After that the boy repeated the alphabet and many words after the Bishop, and was so delighted with his new accomplishment that Bede says he continued to talk incessantly during the whole day, and the following night as long as he could keep awake! Next day the Bishop turned his attention to the patient's head, and sending for a physician ordered him to "heal its scabbiness," while he himself aided the good work by his prayers and blessing. So the boy recovered his health, and developed a beautiful head of wavy hair, whereas before he had been "uncomely, poor, and dumb."

Saint John of Beverley ruled the Church at York for thirteen years, and then retired to Hexham, where three years later he died and was buried.

Another celebrated Archbishop of York was Ældred, who crowned King Harold, and a little later William the Conqueror, with his Queen Matilda.

Archbishop Thurstan, too, we must not forget. He it was who was the chief instrument in saving the north of England from the dreaded Scottish hordes in 1138, when he raised the great army which marched under the united standards of Saint Peter of York, Saint John of Beverley, and Saint Wilfrid of Ripon. The battle they fought has always been known as The Battle of the Standards.

And there is William, great grandson of William the Conqueror, still regarded as the patron saint of York.

As for Roger de Pont l'Evêque who lies buried in the choir, which he rebuilt, he it was who inflamed Henry II. against Saint Thomas Becket and procured his martyrdom.

If we enter the Cathedral by way of the south transept, we shall notice a very graceful tomb. It is that of Bishop Walter de Grey, the builder of this splendid portion of the Church. He lies there, the little Bishop, or rather his effigy, one hand raised in Benediction, the other grasping his pastoral staff, his feet trampling on a dragon. Above, supported by delicate pillars, is a rich and beautiful canopy, where among the foliage of the finials may be seen birds singing. They are said to represent thrushes, called in Yorkshire the Grey Bird, and therefore forming a punning allusion to the name of this Archbishop, Walter de Grey. Archbishop Grey was a great favourite with King Henry III., who more than once stayed with him at the Palace at York. And that

brings us to one of the greatest events of which the Minster has been the scene.

It is Christmastide, in the year of Our Lord, 1242. All the world has assembled at York to witness the marriage of Margaret, the little daughter of Henry III., with Alexander, the young King of Scotland. Neither child is yet eleven years of age, but the splendour of the ceremony is in no way proportional to their size. The crowd of courtiers, nobles, and other guests is so enormous, that the town is far too small to lodge them comfortably. The Scottish party in particular having had a special street assigned to them, a free fight ensues there among the gentlemen's servants, entrusted to find rooms for themselves and their masters. Altogether the City of York, always rather cramped within its walls, is totally inadequate to provide accommodation for the vast concourse which assembles.

The young King Alexander's mother, Mary, daughter of that great Ingelram de Couci, chiefly remembered for his arrogant war-cry—

> "Je ne suis Roy, ni Prince aussi,
> Je suis le Seigneur de Couci!"—

arrives in more than regal state from France, whither she has retired on the death of the late king, her husband. Crowds of French and Scottish lords with their retainers accompany her, and for the little bride herself, she is followed by more than a thousand knights dressed in

robes of silk, and countless ladies in all the various gorgeous costumes of the thirteenth century. No wonder that the people gathered from far and near to see such a wedding.

Some thirty years earlier the aunt of this same little Princess Margaret had been married at York to the father of the present bridegroom. Both weddings were celebrated in the old Norman choir of the Cathedral, built by Archbishop Roger, and at both functions Archbishop Walter de Grey officiated.

But if, on the present occasion, we follow the crowd to the Cathedral with the hope of seeing something of the ceremony we shall be disappointed. For though it is mid-winter, the royal party has risen long before daybreak, and the Archbishop has made the children man and wife before the vast crowds of sightseers have left their beds.

Then follow days of feasting, first one king and then the other entertaining the guests, while the Archbishop, like a true Prince of the North, almost ruins himself in order not to be behind the others in generosity. Sixty oxen, says Matthew Paris, served as the first course for one meal alone.

In the old Norman choir many other historic scenes took place. There, in 1328, Edward III. was married to Philippa of Hainault. There some years later was laid the little coffin of their young son William of Hainault, whose beautiful effigy is still to be seen in the north choir aisle.

One of the most arresting features of York Minster is the very original, and to me, most picturesque choir screen. On it are depicted the Kings of England, beginning with William the Conqueror, and ending with that pitiable and much discussed monarch Henry VI. The original statue was, after the death of the King, regarded with much veneration by the Lancastrian party, who looked upon Henry as a martyr. It disappeared at the time of the Reformation, and the present statue is modern. I have heard this screen described as heavy, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a talk of removing it. Mercifully, however, it was spared to delight to-day such uncritical visitors as myself. And the glass of the windows! How came this jewelled wonder to escape the Vandals of the Commonwealth? Much of it belongs to the fifteenth century, and together with the celebrated Five Sisters Window, is regarded as one of the wonders of the world. The story goes that when Cromwell arrived at York, he had his doubts as to the fidelity of Sir Thomas Fairfax, who lived close by. So a bargain was struck with the knight that if the Minster were left untouched, this great and influential man would remain faithful to the Parliamentary cause.

As one looks at the glorious building, and sees it, not like so many of our cathedrals, either disfigured with modern glass, or left bare and cold without any paintings at all, but stained with the wondrous colours which the sunlight,

passing for centuries through these pictured windows, casts upon the stone, one cannot but feel gratitude to the great general for his promise, whatever our political opinions may be. For the beauty of beauties in York is its painted glass. Whichever way we turn it confronts us. There is the great west window so carefully rebuilt in 1807, how magnificent are these ancient colours given by Archbishop Melton five hundred years ago. And the Heraldic Window with its shields, and the Bell Founders' Window showing the method of casting a bell. But perhaps more beautiful than all are the five sisters, said to have been designed and given by five maiden ladies, who worked panels to serve as models for the glass, and gave the money for the finished work.

And speaking of glass, what are we to say of the Chapter House literally walled with

"Panes of quaint device
Innumerable, of stains and splendid dyes,
. . . . . .
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of kings and queens."

It is unique this octagonal Chapter House of York, for it has no central pillar to support the vaulted roof. No wonder that at the entrance one reads the ancient verse which, translated, runs :—

"As the rose among flowers
So is this dwelling among dwellings."

On our way southward, after leaving Durham, we paid a second visit to York, and found a new interest awaiting us in the great yearly procession held in honour of Saint William, the patron saint of the city, and of those heroic men and women who laid down their lives so willingly during the persecutions of the Catholics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Standing among the vast crowd, which had gathered from all quarters, in the ruins of Saint Mary's Abbey, we saw Mass offered once more on the very site of the ancient altar of the great Benedictine church built by William Rufus. It was a very wonderful spectacle, this vast silent crowd, standing or kneeling on the very spot once covered by what I have heard described as "one of the most perfect examples of architecture in the world." I have visited most of the great churches of Europe, but I think never one more typical of the universal and eternal nature of the Church this ancient abbey represented. Almost all which was of man's construction had disappeared save ruined walls and a few graceful pillars still supporting some of the arches of the triforium. But a roof was there, the blue roof of heaven, in which shone God's everlasting lamp, the sun, and in place of the curiously wrought pavement of former days, nature and time had spread a thick, soft carpet of velvet grass. Flowers there were too, and curtains of ivy where birds nested and joined their little songs of thanksgiving with the rich voices

of the monks from Ampleforth. Altogether it was a wonderful service, and I think everyone felt it so: for the silence was so great that the voice of the Abbot could be heard distinctly, as he sang the same sacred words his predecessors had chanted each day on this same spot for hundreds of years, until the suppression of the Monastery under Henry VIII. in 1538. And as we stood there listening the years rolled back further still, till we seemed to hear the voices of those monks who came from Whitby to found the first Monastery here at York. They are followed by William the Red, trying I suppose to atone for his many sins by enlarging and beautifying the first humble building, and even coming to worship within its walls.

In this church Richard formed his plans for joining the new Cistercian Order of Saint Bernard, and here his friend and patron, the great Archbishop of York, Thurstan, has often said Mass. . . .

To-day the Abbey of Saint Mary of York is in the hands of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, by whose kind permission we are once more taking part in the great service formerly offered daily within its walls. Where monks once walked and meditated, a modern museum has been placed; the Abbot's house serves as a school for the blind. Still, a holy calm seems to hover over the ruins, and in spite of the vastness of the crowd of worshippers and onlookers the silence at the Elevation can be felt as of old.

The pilgrims had been arriving since daybreak, and the city, encircled as it still is by its walls, seemed as absolutely packed as on that day, seven centuries ago, when the French, Scottish, and English guests came pouring in to assist at the marriage of the boy-King of Scotland. It was a strange sight to see in England, when the vast orderly crowd formed up and came singing through the Abbey gates at the close of the service. The end of the procession had scarcely left the grounds when the leaders drew up before the house formerly occupied by Margaret Clitheroe, for as I have said this was a pilgrimage in honour not only of Saint William, but of those brave men and women who after suffering unspeakable torments laid down their lives for their religion, in the reign of Good Queen Bess.

I cannot tell the story of all these people, whose only crime was that they refused to give up the religion in which most of them, and probably all their fathers, had been born and bred, and which was to them more precious than life itself. It does not belong to the story of York Minster, except in so far as that the ancestors of most of them had in that building practised the same faith for which their children were to suffer. Later in the day I was shown at the Bar Convent the relics of many of these martyrs, a handkerchief dipped in the blood of one, the linen of another, vestments worn by a priest. But I think the most moving of all was a little white hand once belonging to that Margaret Clitheroe

whose home still stands in one of the ancient streets of York City. I have before me a short life of this intrepid woman. It was lent me by the author and is indeed a precious treasure. There we read of her marriage when yet a girl of eighteen, of her conversion to the Catholic faith, of the birth of her children, and of her happy home to which she was always ready to welcome the destitute and persecuted. It was on account of this charitable work that she was at last seized, and brought to trial before the Council in the Common Hall of York. Here she refused to plead, fearing to bring trouble on her husband, who was at that time not a Catholic. So she was sentenced to be pressed to death. The story of her execution is horrible, and yet so heroic that I must dwell upon it if only for a moment. The authoress of the little book of which I have spoken actually seems to take one with her, into the cell, to spend the last night with the martyr.

"I would gladly have one of the maids to bear me company this night," she says, "not for any fear of death, for it is my comfort, but the flesh is frail." And we see her sending her shoes and stockings to her little daughter "that she may follow in my steps," and she goes cheerfully to the Tolbooth, where she is to suffer. . . .

It was a full quarter of an hour after they had laid her on the floor, a sharp stone under her back, her hands tied out to two posts, and eight hundredweight of iron piled on to the door which covered her, before she died.

"Jesu, Jesu, help me!" she said; and a little later: "Jesu, I suffer this for Thy sake." . . .

They say that one of the sheriffs turned away weeping, unable to bear the sight of this beautiful young woman so done to death, for nothing save her constancy to the faith. . . .

And there was John Harrington, who during the night before his execution, being imprisoned with a number of felons, preached to them so effectually that seven out of the thirteen who were to be executed with him next morning were baptized before they were led out to die. But as for Harrington himself that is one of the stories I cannot tell, or even think of for horror. But as, later, we stand where the gallows once stood, and think of the gallant little army whose bodies perished on that spot, we wonder whether OUR faith, whatever it may be, would stand the test of what they suffered, and emerge as triumphant.

. . . . . .

I find it impossible to leave York without taking my readers for a stroll round the walls. From thence we can look down into the now grass-grown moat on one side and the beautiful gardens of the Cathedral clergy on the other. From velvet lawns and tennis-courts, terraces and steps lead up to the grey battlements upon which we are standing. The pink chestnuts are in flower. How lovely they are, the delicate blossoms! From below we cannot appreciate their individual beauty, they are too far away

and above us. They remind us of the exquisite work of the old monks which we have been admiring, and still more the perfection of faith of the martyrs we have been celebrating. They are too high, too far removed by time and circumstance for us to realize fully the meaning of their lives and their deaths. And so presently we climb down by one of the narrow stone stairs, to find ourselves in all the life and stir of the modern city, and before long, having fetched the car, and picked up our luggage, are off on our way to Ripon.

V

RIPON

The road from York to Borrowbridge is long and straight through scantily inhabited country, and would have been monotonous save for the untiring energy of our good car. Once indeed, soon after leaving the city, we turned aside to visit the Saxon Church of Kirkhammerton, and found it most interesting, standing on a steep little hill, and built of irregularly shaped stones piled one on another, the broad interstices filled up with chips and cement. The tower door, too, with rough, primitive pillars and capitals, caught our attention, and prepared us for the church itself, almost complete, with piscina, chancel, and tower arch. A new nave and choir have been built, to which the original church now serves as the south aisle. As we stood outside and looked down over the beautifully kept graveyard to the desolate country beyond, we pictured the good folk arriving on Sundays with their families from far and wide. It was here that the young people met, fell in love, and were married. Up this hill they bore their children later to baptism. Here the older folk passed on the news from one parish to another, grew feebler

week by week, till they disappeared for a time, and at last one day were carried beneath this great stone porch in their coffins, and after they had been laid before the altar, and Mass had been offered up for them, it was in the old Saxon burial ground, which now lies beneath this finely shaven velvet lawn, that they were laid to rest.

The church is now called the Church of Saint John the Baptist, but was originally dedicated to Saint Quintin, the only one in England named after that much tormented and almost forgotten Roman saint. His festival was held on October the thirty-first, and his aid was especially sought by those afflicted with dropsy.

When we emerged from Kirkhammerton church we found that a curtain of mist had fallen over the land, so that the distance was hidden, and we could easily recall all kinds of scenes which had once taken place in this wild northern country through which we were passing. Savage bands of Danes and Angles closing in upon the scattered farms and lonely villages, carrying off the sheep and cows such as those whose dim forms could here and there be seen feeding in the meadows, and fair-haired women and children like those who pass us now and then. And through the mist runs the great road leading northward, always northward. . . . And now it is growing more hilly, flowers are less common in the meadows. We are in the county of broad acres, they stretch away and away on either hand,

the hedges, where there are any, forming no noticeable dividing line, so cropped and low they are as to be almost invisible.

But Elizabeth loves it. She is not of an artistic temperament, and infinitely prefers a good, straight, well-drained road through open country to any of your deep and winding lanes, however picturesque. So up hill and down she rushes headlong at her topmost speed, eating up the miles as though they were inches. However, after crossing the Swale by a big bridge, we did turn off into a smaller road shaded by mountain ash trees. Yet still beyond them the country looked as though the Danes had been over it lately, so sparsely populated it seemed.

Then from a rise we saw in the distance the fog materialize into a ghostly town, and in its centre a huge, heavy-looking church crowned by three square towers—Ripon!

It is a very ancient building that we enter a few minutes later, the successor of the still more ancient church erected by Prince Alchfrith in the seventh century, for a colony of Scottish monks who came from the celebrated Abbey of Melrose to convert this half-heathen land. They are supposed to have been more or less free lances these first religious men of Ripon, following no particular rule, but just good men, living the austere life of their Abbot Eata, who himself was a pupil of Saint Aidan, that monk so praised by Bede on account of his holy, self-denying, and charitable life. And for guest master whom

should they have but Cuthbert, the renowned saint of Lindisfarne. It was during his Ripon days that the angels used to come and visit him. They would knock at the monastery gate, it is said, and sit at the table in the refectory, and behave just like the other guests. And Cuthbert, in his gentle charming way, would serve them with meat and drink. But he knew them, oh yes, he knew them for angels. For once, when he found his guests gone, he noticed that there were no footprints though there was snow on the ground; while on the table, just where he had left them seated while he went to fetch something he thought they needed, were three fair white loaves, all hot, and of marvellous beauty and sweetness, so that all the chamber was filled with their fragrance. So Cuthbert knew that the angels of the Lord had been his guests at Ripon that day.

We thought of him as we entered the great church, successor of the humble oratory in which he and his brother monks, and those angel guests of his, had worshipped.

But the Scottish brethren had quitted Ripon before even the predecessor of this Cathedral was built. They had gone away at the coming of Wilfrid, who succeeded their original Abbot Eata, he who had brought them from Melrose. They found themselves unable to submit to the rule of their new Bishop and returned to their old monastery, where they continued to follow the usages of their founder Saint Columba, he

who long ago had come over from Ireland to bring the Gospel to the northern Picts. So it is of Wilfrid we have to think as we make our journey round Ripon Cathedral.

I was copying down a list of the principal events which have marked the history of this building, when we were accosted by a very good-looking and intelligent young man, one of those mysterious people who always seem lurking about the shadows of old churches, to help recall the past for more or less ignorant visitors.

He told us that Saint Wilfrid built two churches at Ripon, the second being on the site now occupied by the present Cathedral. There are however, it appears, no remains whatever of these, unless it be the crypt which we will presently visit. For the churches in these northern regions of England shared the fate of the unfortunate people who worshipped in them, and were destroyed again and again by the fire and sword of the barbarous heathen, who periodically ravaged the country. So it appears that no portion of Ripon Cathedral, as it exists, is older than the days of Roger de Pont l'Evêque, that Archbishop of York who by his mischief-making and tale-bearing, and anxiety to curry favour with King Henry II., was mainly responsible for the murder of Saint Thomas of Canterbury.

After the Norman Conquest, when the country had become settled, Ripon had grown to be a great Minster, with a house of monks known as the Canons of Saint Wilfrid. It was a favourite

country residence of the Archbishops of York, who, under the protection of the Norman soldiery, were now able to venture out from the walls of their town into the open country.

At first sight, after the elaborate beauty of Lincoln and York, Ripon Minster strikes one as cold and stern. In fact reminding one somewhat of the great Saint who, though long dead at the time of its erection, is responsible for its foundation. But as one becomes accustomed to its style, so as to realize the purity of its lines, its broad and spacious nave, its quiet, steady progress as it nears the sanctuary, the rich beauties of the choir, hidden as they are by the dividing stone screen, one learns to appreciate this great building, just as one sees more and more splendour in the character of Wilfrid, the saint of Ripon, as one becomes better acquainted with him.

Approaching the east end of the nave a curious sight meets one, for the monastery was dissolved by Henry VIII. just as the monks were rebuilding the tower arches, which had become ruinous, and to this day the work remains unfinished, forming one of those flaws in a beautiful building which one would on no account see removed because of its historical interest.

We have reached the end of the south aisle and our guide is pointing to a tomb against the Cathedral wall. On its slab is sculptured a grove of trees in which a lion is walking, while with his back turned to him a knight kneels in

prayer. "It was an Irish prince who while fighting in the Holy Land found a lion," so he tells us, adding that the beast became so tame that it followed him like a dog. It accompanied him to England, but its master died while passing through Ripon on his way home to Ireland. The tomb has been used as a table on which tenants paid their rents due to the monastery, and the inscription has unfortunately become too worn to be legible.

Passing through the exquisite rood screen, which is said to resemble that which formerly stood in Fountains Abbey, we next visit the choir, to admire the magnificent fifteenth-century stalls, and strangely sculptured misereres. What humorists the old monks were! Look at this smiling pig, with cheeks blown out playing the bagpipes to her piglets, who are dancing delightedly to the music. I can fancy the artist's brethren laughing as he shows them his work, especially if, as some think, the sculptured faces were portraits, and the scenes depicted had reference to some sly stories connected with the originals. Here is Jonah about to be swallowed by the whale, and on the next seat the prophet emerging from the great jaws cheerful and unharmed. There is an elephant too, picking up a man, and carrying on his back a castle. For four hundred years he has stood there in front of the bishop's throne.

A very curious object in the choir is the hand stretching out from beneath the organ, just over

the central door leading through the screen. In olden days it was used to beat time for the choir.

But of all the wonderful and interesting things to be seen at Ripon, the most wonderful is the crypt of Saint Wilfrid. Everyone has, of course, heard of it, and most visitors to the north of England must have visited it. But we had not, and so I cannot forbear taking my reader down through the little trap-door in the south-east angle of the nave to explore this most ancient and mysterious place.

The steps by which we descend are very old and worn, leading down to a narrow, flat-roofed passage, which skirts the foundations of the great pier above. Our guide has given us each a candle, and by its flickering light, for there is no other, we stumble along until we finally emerge into a small, barrel-roofed chamber, lying immediately below the original position of the high altar. In the passage, and here and there in the vault itself, are niches for lights, one especially which caught our attention, being hollowed as if to hold oil and a floating wick, and pierced above for the escape of smoke. In this chamber too is the celebrated NEEDLE, about which so many theories have been suggested, but which seemed to us to have been originally another but larger niche for lighting purposes. In the eastern wall, just above where probably once stood the altar, is another recess, resembling that to be seen in the crypt or chapel of Saint Mary

Magdalene at Saint Maximin, in which her head is preserved. But the problem of this crypt of Saint Wilfrid remains unsolved. Was it a cell where some hermit spent his days in penance? Or may it have been merely a hiding-place for relics and other treasures in times of danger? Or is it too fanciful and ignorant to suppose that this strange vault was once the sanctuary and burial-place of some great king or warrior, afterwards deified, like those underground chambers we find in Celtic lands? Bones have been found buried here beneath the floor, bones of animals, besides those of men. In that case, the founders of the original church at Ripon would only be following out the common early Christian custom of establishing their church over the existing pagan worshipping place, to which the people had grown accustomed. And there is always the possibility, that whatever its original use, this crypt of Ripon may have been the burial-place of the great Wilfrid himself. For me he certainly felt very near as I stood there the other day, much nearer than he did in the mighty church above.

After leaving Ripon we drove to Studley Park, and as the mists had lifted, lunched beneath a giant beech tree; and afterwards, passing a gate, entered the grounds of Fountains Abbey. How lovely it was in the afternoon light, but how melancholy, how forsaken! Through the exquisite grounds we wandered, between yew hedges high and ancient enough to have been

planted by the Cistercian monks who once dwelt there. There was a lake I remember in the shape of a vast crescent moon, and on its banks a little white Greek temple. Then the path turned, and soon after we found ourselves entering a glade, a green hidden valley, bounded to the right by low sandstone cliffs, to the left by a stream, and beyond the stream by wood and forest. And in front of us, beside the water, lay the Abbey. I think I have never seen anything so beautiful, and at the same time so sad as Fountains Abbey. It is a ruin, and yet enough remains of the ancient buildings to enable one to realize the great monastery as it was in the days of its glory. Here is the Abbot's house, where, outside of what was once the kitchen window, was found among the rubbish heap an ancient silver spoon, and other treasures lost probably in those careless days when Abbot Thirsk ruled with so lavish a hand. He it was who joined the Pilgrimage of Grace and died on the scaffold. Close by stood the infirmary, with its chapel. And there are the refectories, and guest chambers, the great cellars and store-houses, the cloisters, so perfect that we can feel the monks' gowns brushing against us as we walk.

Above all there is the great church with its magnificent Norman nave, its transepts, soaring capitals, and graceful arches. High over all watches the great square tower, the tracery of its beautiful gothic windows still in place; and cut deep in the stone of its cornice the inscription

which, translated, runs: "To the Immortal and Invisible King of Ages, to the only God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

At the west end of the nave stood the Galilee, as at Durham, that special part of the church reserved for women: while at the eastern extremity were those curious chapels of the Nine Altars, given by the great and good Abbot John de Cancia. I wonder what he thinks of his beautiful church if he ever looks down upon it to-day! I think it must almost break his heart. He knew so well the story of the first Abbot of Fountains, Richard, formerly Sacrist of the Abbey of Saint Mary of York. He had heard the tradition of how Richard and his brethren, Ralph, Gamel, Hamo, and the rest of the little band of earnest young men, growing dissatisfied with the somewhat lax life of the great monastery so lavishly endowed by William Rufus, and hearing moreover of the great revivalist movement of Saint Bernard of Clairvaulx, determined to break away like a swarm of bees, and found a colony of these new Benedictines, or as they are called Cistercians, in some hidden valley where they could devote themselves uninterruptedly to the service of God. The Abbot of Saint Mary's was naturally furious at the slight thus passed upon his management and rule, and there was a great scene. But the Archbishop of York, a friend of Saint Bernard, came to the help of the seceders, even taking them for a time into his own palace. Finally he led them to this valley in which we are

standing, and telling them that for the future it was their own, bade them build a new monastery, and so left them. Now this Archbishop Thurstan was a very great and remarkable man, but in this instance he does not seem to have acted with much practical commonsense, for it was mid-winter, and apart from the little stream of the Skell, and a giant elm tree which stood near-by, they were foodless and shelterless. The Bishop sent them occasional cartloads of bread, and they drank from the river. They built a thatched hut around the bole of the tree, and probably others beneath the great yews we still see near the ruins. But even in their poverty they yet managed to relieve the misery of the poor, who soon found them and began claiming their charity. In time of famine, when the bread ceased coming, they gathered leaves, roots, and grass, and with water from the Skell made a rude kind of soup to quench their hunger. But great as were their sufferings they never looked back, but lived their holy lives, and died their holy deaths, till at length their fortunes began to mend. Several rich and serious-minded persons, dissatisfied with the wickedness of the world, joined the community, and with them came the wherewithal not only to live, but to build the church and monastery. And so gradually the Abbey of Fountains arose in Skeldale, as the valley is called, and continued to flourish till that November day in 1539, when the monks were turned out, and the property sold to Sir Richard Gresham of London.

As we walked back along the road beside the low sandstone cliffs toward what was once the Abbey Gate House, the clouds grew thinner in the west, and a pale light flooded the valley, so that the shadows of the trees grew longer and longer, the leaves and the grass greener, till the sun gaining power the sky began to flush with that warm transparent radiance which tells of the coming of twilight, and reminded us of the long dark roads to be traversed before reaching Durham. And all the while we felt the ghostly forms of the monks thronging in upon us, till, as we reached the base of the old cross which once guarded the entrance, they drew backward till they mingled with the white vapours which were beginning to rise from the river which still flows unchanged through the midst of this valley of "Our Lady of the Watersprings."

VI

DURHAM

Continuing our way northward we presently came upon Thirsk, or Threske as it was formerly called, where was once a castle belonging to Roger Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, who raised a rebellion in the reign of Henry II., and calling in the Scottish King to his aid, caused untold suffering and ruin to himself, his family, and his poor harassed country. And Darlington we skirt, where is a twelfth-century church dedicated to Saint Cuthbert, making us feel that we are nearing our journey's end; and so through dreary regions of smoke, fog, and output from mines, we at length reached the ancient city of Durham.

Ever since I was a little child I had longed to see Durham. My father, who loved burrowing among old musty histories and unearthing quaint legends, just as I do, had early introduced me to his friends, Saint Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede. When he went on the Northern Circuit he would stay in the Castle at Durham, and haunt the Cathedral and its library, coming home full of fresh information about his favourites. So it was no strange town we entered the other

evening, but rather some dream city I had known and loved in a previous existence, over whose narrow crowded streets hung a halo of romance, which made even the squalid purlieus down beside the river beautiful in my eyes.

We put up at an old-fashioned hotel in New Elvit, called the Three Tuns. It was a charming old house with a pleasant, low-roofed parlour, and a cheerful wood fire before which we were glad to sit in the evening, for we southern folk found it cold in the north. And next morning after breakfast we set out to climb the hill, probably following the very track up which the bearers of the Body of Blessed Cuthbert went so many centuries ago. For you must know that Durham is not, like many of our Cathedral cities, a growth which took its root in Prehistoric or Roman times. This wonderful place we are about to visit is of purely Christian origin, owing its very foundation to a saint, who, according to the beautiful old history, commenced life, like David of old, as a shepherd boy. As in fancy we follow his coffin up the hill, let us try to call to mind Cuthbert even further back still, a child playing ball with other children. Suddenly he catches sight of a tiny boy, a stranger, most beautiful to behold, who begs him to leave his games since God has chosen him to be a great pillar of the church. And so at eight years old he begins his studies and religious life, at the Abbey of Melrose in Scotland, and lives so virtuously that " all the people have joy of him."

He used to keep the sheep of the monastery, and like a true shepherd quickly became a poet, a seer, a beholder of visions, and dreamer of dreams. It was while he was watching his flock on the hillside that he saw the soul of Bishop Aidan carried to Heaven by angels, and many other wonders which he told to his spiritual master Saint Boisil, whom later he succeeded as Abbot of Melrose.

There followed the days when the Abbot, discovering Cuthbert's gift of preaching, sent him forth as a missionary to travel about the country, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, proclaiming the news of the Gospel to the crowds who gathered to hear him. So great was his skill and earnestness, so bright and beautiful his face, so winning his gentle manner that none could resist him.

The old historian tells us that he used to visit the wild and distant villages and farms where no other dared to go, and would often be absent from the monastery for weeks together, teaching, converting, baptizing the rude mountain folk; and as he ministered to their souls, no doubt bringing healing and comfort to their sick bodies, as was the custom with the monks of old. It is a beautiful and touching picture which Simeon of Durham and the great Bede give of their friend and hero, reminding one of the later wanderings of our great Sussex Bishop, Saint Richard of Chichester.

After some years of this life Cuthbert was

sent to Lindisfarne as Prior of that monastery. He had been specially selected for the post by Eata the Bishop, both because of his great holiness, his gentle, persuasive eloquence, and his unshakeable orthodoxy. In his early days at Melrose he had been reared in the traditions of the Scottish Church, brought over from Ireland by Saint Columba. But at the Council of Whitby, to which he like all the world had gone, he had found himself unable to withstand the arguments of Wilfrid the apostle of Saint Peter. He saw at once that the differences between the parties were not those of faith, but merely questions of detail, such as the manner in which priests should cut their hair, and the day on which Easter should be celebrated. Therefore, realizing the necessity for an absolute uniformity in the practice of a Church which aspired to be universal, and moreover being reminded by Saint Wilfrid that it was to Saint Peter and not to Saint Columba that Our Lord had entrusted the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, he gave in his submission.

So now we find him at Lindisfarne, at that time the seat of the Bishops of Northumbria. It was not an easy task which had been assigned to him, for he found in the monastery some of the brethren who still followed the Scottish Rule, and resented his coming. But by his cheerful patience and steadfast faith he at last won them over.

For twelve years Cuthbert remained Prior of

Lindisfarne, gaining more and more the love and devotion of the community. Sometimes he would retire from the world, and pass long days of prayer and contemplation in the solitude of a cell he had built on the little rocky island of Farne. It was there that King Egfrid, Bishop Trumwine, and the rest of the crowd of ecclesiastics and nobles found him, and after many refusals and tears wrung from him a consent to become Bishop of Lindisfarne, and he was consecrated at York on Easter Day in the year six hundred and eighty-five. . . . We have nearly reached the top of the hill and must hasten our story.

For two years Cuthbert ruled the diocese of Northumbria from Lindisfarne. Then, though he was still comparatively young, feeling death approaching, he retired to his beloved hermitage on the Island of Farne. There for two months he remained, at the end of which time he departed from this life having, as he expressed it, "fought his little warfare for the Lord." So they laid him in the coffin one of his friends had given him long before, and which he had hidden beneath the turf on the north side of his hermitage, and bore him away to Lindisfarne, where he was laid at the south side of the altar of the Cathedral of Saint Peter the Apostle. And they remembered the last words he had spoken to them just before his soul quitted his body, "Keep peace one with another, always, and the love of God."

Eleven years afterward the monks opened his coffin, and finding the body "more like that of a man who was asleep than of one dead," wrapped it in fresh vestments and placed it in a shrine which they had prepared. And so the place, even as Cuthbert had himself foretold, became celebrated for miracles, and was sought as a sanctuary. And again the years pass till we reach the middle of the ninth century, when the Danes and Frisians, led by a savage king named Halfdene, were ravaging Northumbria. Then the Bishop of Lindisfarne becoming fearful for his monks and people, and above all for the sacred body of the Saint, which still lay upon the pavement of the Sanctuary, had it removed in its linen winding sheet, which had been given to Saint Cuthbert by his friend the Abbess Verca. After wrapping the body in costly vestments, they laid it in three coffins. The first was of black oak, sculptured as we shall see for ourselves later, the next, also of wood, was covered with hide, the outermost of all with gold and precious stones. And on the breast of the dead man they placed a tiny altar of silver, a corporal for covering the Blessed Sacrament, a golden chalice, a paten, the scissors with which they had been wont to cut his hair, and an ivory comb. And for a sacred relic they gave him the skull of King Oswald, the Christian King of Northumbria, who had been murdered by the savage Penda at the battle of Maserfield. Such was the precious burden which the Bishop and his flock conveyed to the

DURHAM CATHEDRAL FROM THE BANKS OF THE WEAR

mainland, and thereafter carried far and wide, seeking a place of safety for themselves and their treasure. Seven noble youths had volunteered as bearers, and wherever the procession halted a little wooden chapel was erected, and dedicated to Saint Cuthbert. We find them still, these shrines, or their successors, dotted about marking the route by which the body travelled.

And so they wandered here and they wandered there. As Simeon says: "They were like sheep fleeing before wolves!" And all the while the seven faithful bearers, of whom the chief were Hunred, Stitheard, Edmund, and Franco, bore the coffin on their shoulders allowing no one to touch it but themselves, till they were worn with fatigue and growing years. Then guided still by the Saint, they found a mysterious horse and waggon on which they laid their burden, and things became a little easier. By and by they came to Chester-le-Street, and there for over a century they settled, for it was a lonely spot, and safer than the larger towns. They built a church as usual, in which they placed the body, and there must have been many worshippers who came to visit the shrine; for it was here, later, that Egilricke, Bishop of Durham, found buried beneath the floor that enormous amount of money which he appropriated, and returning to Peterborough whence he had originally come, occupied himself and his treasure with building roads and causeways over the marshes.

But after a hundred years of comparative peace the good Saint and his little band of pilgrims were forced by the Danes to start off once more on their wanderings. To Ripon they fled first. Then, hearing that Chester-le-Street was once more safe, they commenced their journey back. But upon reaching a spot called Wurdelan, on the eastern side of the hill of Durham, the waggon bearing the body of the Saint refused to move. More and more assistants were called, but their efforts were useless. Surely it was plain to everyone that Saint Cuthbert had chosen his final resting-place!

Never before had he expressed himself so clearly. Thereupon a fast of three days was proclaimed, during which time prayers were offered up continually that the will of the Saint might be carried into effect. At the end of that time a certain monk named Eadmer declared that he had been informed in a vision that they were to take the body to Dunholme. But where was this Dunholme? No one had ever heard of such a place. There follows an old legend which tells of a woman who had lost her cow and was heard calling to a friend to ask if she had seen it. The answer came that it was in Dunholme, which on enquiry turned out to be the name for the summit of the hill they were passing, where to-day the Cathedral stands.

The legend goes on to relate how the bearers thereupon attempted to lift the coffin, and to their joy found it light as a feather, and so

climbed the hill as we are climbing it now, only it was between forest trees they made their way, instead of photograph and memento shops. Having gained the clearing which crowned the summit, they set down their burden and raised over it a "Chapel of green boughs." That was the first Cathedral of Durham.

Around the foot and up the slopes of the hill the descendants of the Lindisfarne emigrants grouped their dwellings, so forming the germ of the first city. And wherever the sacred body had rested, and still more at the spot where it now lay, miracles began to take place, wonderful miracles, so that the news spread, and the little church soon became too small for the crowds of worshippers, and when offerings both of land and money came rolling in, Bishop Aldhun, who ruled the See from 990 till 1018, built a large stone church, into which he moved the still incorruptible body of Saint Cuthbert.

It is a steep hill, but good to climb slowly. There is so much to think of, so many to picture toiling up the same road. Here is the great Cnut walking barefoot, dressed as a pilgrim, come to pay his respects to the great Saint of Northumbria, and bestow upon him the district of Staindrop and many other rich gifts. Here too is Duncan, King of the Scots, arriving with his army to besiege and rob the wealthy shrine; vain project, for Cuthbert, who during life was one of the meekest and gentlest of souls, turning ever the other cheek to the smiter, became after

death a terrible Saint to offend, as Duncan found to his cost. For during the siege of Durham most of his cavalry were slain, and all his foot soldiers; their heads were gathered together and hung up on posts to decorate the market-place. And here comes Bishop Eadred, returning from his visit to King Hardicnut, having spent a large part of Saint Cuthbert's treasure in purchasing the bishopric. But he does not go unpunished for his simony, for just as he reaches the door of the Cathedral, he is seized with a fatal illness, and dies very shortly afterwards. And we may meet the great and good Norman Bishop, William of Saint Carilef, riding down the hill on his way to the seacoast, escaping from the wrath of William Rufus, which he has incurred by his friendship with Duke Robert of Normandy. This is the Bishop who at his coming to Durham turned out the secular clergy, and replaced them by Benedictine monks from Yarrow and Wearmouth. And it is with this Bishop of Saint Carilef that we come to the beginning of the building of the great Cathedral we are about to visit.

For during the three years of his exile in Normandy, Bishop William conceived the idea that if ever he returned to his diocese he would rebuild his Cathedral, which was in a very ruinous state, taking as his models those magnificent buildings which were beginning to rise all over the north of France. Even in his absence his monks began the great work with a refectory, the crypt of

which still remains and which we can see presently. And on the Bishop's return he did not forget his intention, but, no doubt as a thank-offering for his restoration, began that matchless building which even now is the admiration and despair of every honest architect.

There are many, many more whom we meet going up and down the hill, but we ourselves have reached the summit, and come full in face of the north side of the Cathedral, standing as it has stood for nearly a thousand years defying time, weather, and the hands of would-be restorers, and yet remaining the most interesting, stately, and alluring Cathedral in England.

As for the first time one notes its matchless situation, how, with its neighbouring castle, once the home of the Bishop, it dominates the Valley, and the surrounding country, one ceases to wonder at the position Saint Cuthbert occupied in the life and belief of the people of Northumbria, and more especially of the citizens of the mediæval city of Durholm. One of them has left a poem, the translation of which I quote, as I think no better picture has ever been given of this strange and beautiful sanctuary, even in these days both bodily and spiritually the actual abode of the Saint:

"The city is celebrated
Throughout the kingdom of the Britons;
Placed on a steep eminence
Surrounded by cliffs,
Wonderfully large.

The Wear surrounds it,
A river strong in its current ;
And therein reside
Various kinds of fish
In the midst of the floods.
And there grows
A great forest of woods,
In the recesses of which dwell
Many wild animals.
In the deep dales there is
A countless number of beasts.
There is also in the town,
One, illustrious among men,
The honourable and blessed Cuthbert :
And the head of the pure king
Oswald, the Lion of the English ;
And Bishop Aidan,
Aedbercht, and Aedfrid,
Illustrious associates ;
Therein, along with them, is
Aethelwald, the Bishop,
And the illustrious author Beda ;
And Boisil, the Abbot,
Who taught the pure Cuthbert
Willingly in his youth ;
And well did he receive his instruction.
There abide with that blessed one
Within that minster
Countless relics,
Where many persons honour them wonderfully,
As writers report,
Whilst they await
The just sentence of the Lord."

And around this solemn Place of Relics lies the ancient graveyard, covered by its green pall of velvet sward, dotted here and there by the ancient stones which mark the resting-places of

the "People of Saint Cuthbert." Across it one instinctively walks quickly, lightly, and in silence, for it is the very same graveyard about which people used to relate those terrifying stories concerning women who dared to defile it with their feet. For Saint Cuthbert, who was gentleness itself to our poor frail sex during life, is said to have taken a violent dislike to women later, on account of the evil behaviour of the monks and nuns of Coldingham Monastery. He therefore ordained that no woman should dare to set foot within the Cathedral precincts, and those who did so were visited by terrible judgments. As we hurry across, therefore, we think of Sungeova and her husband Gamel returning at night from some festivity, and in order to save themselves from the muddy road, taking a short cut across the grass of the cemetery. We can see her face change as she is seized with that "vague horror" of which Simeon of Durham speaks, and hear her shriek that she is going mad, and as soon as she reaches the road again she falls down, and being carried to her home, dies that night. And there is that other woman, who upon committing the same kind of trespass, bit out her own tongue, and took to wandering. She was one day found lying dead, a knife in her hand, and her throat cut from ear to ear. There are many such stories related at Durham of those women who ventured to cross the garth and enter the Cathedral. Earl Tosti's wife for instance, who being too frightened to go herself, and yet having

an overwhelming curiosity to see the wonders of the church, sent her maid with directions to come back and tell her all about it. So that time it was upon the girl that the curse fell, and she died that night, while her mistress set up a wonderful crucifix in the Cathedral in reparation of her fault.

For myself I arrived safely at the north door, to be greeted with the sight of the celebrated Sanctuary Knocker, which has been so much described, photographed, and modelled, as to need no further word from me. It calls up, however, the subject of Sanctuary which is less generally known, and is yet so necessary in order to understand this Cathedral we are visiting.

In olden days before the King, personified by his Judges, went travelling through England administering justice, punishment often followed crime without the delay of formal enquiry, so that the innocent sometimes suffered for the guilty, and death inflicted in self-defence was liable to be punished as if it had been deliberate murder. In fact the whole country was in a state difficult to realize in these more settled days, when human life is so much more tenderly regarded.

So at various parts of the kingdom sanctuaries were established, in order that any criminal flying from vengeance, if once he could reach one of these havens of refuge, would be safe, at all events until his cause had been heard and judged. Sanctuaries were of course in use long before

Christian times. We shall all remember how Moses was commanded to tell the Israelites upon entering Palestine to choose certain Cities of Refuge for those fugitives who had shed blood against their will. Indeed, it is said that at all the cross-roads of the Jews there were signposts pointing to such cities, marked with the word Refuge. There was also the Sanctuary of the Altar of Burnt Offerings that stood in the Temple, to which Joab made his way when he heard of David's death. And the Greeks and Romans had such inviolable sanctuaries, which, however, not being so wisely regulated as those of the Jews, often became centres where criminals congregated and became a danger to the State.

Now Durham was such a sanctuary, for did it not possess the Incorruptible Body of Saint Cuthbert! It was indeed to the Saint himself that the criminal fled for refuge, clinging to the Sanctuary Knocker as Jews of old clung to the Horns of the Altar. Cuthbert had foreseen that it would be so, even as he lay dying in his hermitage on Farne Island, and had begged the monks to make his grave there, instead of taking his body to Lindisfarne, where as he said "fugitives and criminals" would flock to his burial-place. "For," he added, "mean as I am, there has gone abroad the report that I am the servant of God, and therefore you would very often find it necessary to intercede for such characters, so that the presence of my body would be productive of much trouble for you."

The monks, however, insisted that the benefits would be greater than the trouble, and the body of Saint Cuthbert became one of the most celebrated sanctuaries in England, first at Lindisfarne and afterwards at Durham.

Before the Vandal Wyatt did his best to ruin Durham Cathedral, the north porch had over it two little chambers, in which relays of monks watched day and night to admit any fugitive who fled to the body of their Saint for protection. As soon as he was within, and the great door barred against his pursuers, the bell of the Galilee Chapel was rung, to let the people of the town know that a man had arrived to claim the Peace of Saint Cuthbert. Then the Prior and monks came hurrying in through the south door, which still leads into the cloister, and an enquiry was held, very much after the manner set down by Moses ages earlier. And all the while the bell went tolling, tolling.

Then presently, if all was found satisfactory, the fugitive was clothed in a black gown, with the yellow cross of Saint Cuthbert on his left shoulder, and taken by way of the triforium, across the west end, and down a stairway into a grilled recess, which one may still see, between the entrance to the Galilee and the south door. Here he was kept for thirty-seven days, being provided with food and a bed. During that time, if no pardon could be obtained, arrangements were made for the man to be conveyed out of the kingdom. Then, bearing the white wooden cross

of the Sanctuary Man, he was passed on from guardian to guardian, till he reached the sea-coast, and was placed on board a ship bound for his destination.

I have given this account of the customs of Sanctuary at some length, because it was one of the greatest privileges and glories of Durham Cathedral. Even while the sacred body was resting at Chester-le-Street, the Saint appeared to the Abbot, bidding him command King Guthred to make his church a sure refuge for fugitives, "so that any one who flees to my body, for what cause soever, shall have protection there for thirty-seven days." And when Guthred died he bequeathed the carrying out of the Saint's commands to the kings and bishops who should follow. Terrible indeed, we are told, was the fate of those who infringed this privilege. When the King Reinewald overran Northumbria, and seized the territory of Saint Cuthbert, he divided the land between two of his leaders, Scula and Onlafbal. The latter, a savage and cruel person, inflicted great misery upon the People of Saint Cuthbert at Durham, and when he was warned by the Bishop of the misfortunes which would fall upon him in consequence: "What is the use of threatening me with this dead man!" he cried. "I vow by my gods that from this time I will be his enemy and yours," and rushing forward he tried to enter the Cathedral over the bodies of the Bishop and monks, who, terrified at his words, had flung themselves praying upon the pave-

ment. One foot he placed within and then stood fixed, unable to advance or retire, or even to move, and all the while suffering untold tortures. Then at last, finding himself in the clutch of some power he was unable to resist, he broke out into a wild confession of his crimes, and so gave up his wicked spirit.

Endless are the stories related by the old chroniclers of the manner in which the Saint of Durham continued to rule his diocese from his grave behind the high altar.

He could defend himself too, as on that day when William the Norman's friend, Earl Robert, broke into the city with seven hundred men, and a general fight ensued. Sparks from a burning house had set fire to the Cathedral which seemed doomed, till the People of Saint Cuthbert, falling on their knees, besought the Saint to protect his house and himself. Then immediately the wind arose in the east, and drove the fire on to the houses in which the Norman soldiers had taken refuge, so that they all perished in the flames and smoke.

And there was the great William himself, who began to indulge in doubts as to this incorruptible body about which he had heard such wonders, and determined that he would see it. He arrived at Durham, and climbed the hill to the Cathedral, not the building we are just entering, but standing on the same site, and with the same Saint lying, as we shall presently see, in the same position he still occupies. It was All Saints' Day,

but William was thoroughly determined that as soon as Mass was over he would carry out his plan, which was no less than to have the grave opened and see this mighty miracle worker, who had defied his friend the Earl, and destroyed his Norman regiment. He was just about to step forward, when he was seized with a burning heat too terrible to endure, and hastening out of the church mounted his horse and galloped away, never drawing rein till he had crossed the Tees.

We recall these strange old stories and many others of later date as we cross the threshold and find ourselves in the matchless nave, speaking of which Doctor Johnson used the expression "rocky solidity and indeterminate duration." Surely nothing more magnificent in Norman architecture can exist than this ancient building of William of Saint Carileph. It is so suggestive of the Norman character, stern, massive, unyielding, built to last for ever, plain when compared with the later Gothic, but refined and perfect in its very simplicity. I do not think there could be a more fitting shrine for the simple and holy Shepherd Bishop, whose grave we have come to visit. These massive pillars, no pair alike, covered with zig-zag, lattice, or spiral mouldings cut three inches deep into the solid stone, and so sharp and perfect that it is impossible to believe that the hands which sculptured them have been in their graves for more than eight hundred years! And above these giants are the arches which connect them, richer even than

the pillars, bearing the weight of the triforium and clerestory, pure Norman like the rest; above which the whole scheme closes in a perfect Norman roof. I cannot describe it, I cannot even picture it to myself, I can only remember the awe and the wonder of it, and the hush which fell over my spirit as my eyes rose slowly upward, upward, and I remembered that those stones had looked down upon Saint Cuthbert's very bones when his grave was opened in 1541, and again in our own days.

Durham Cathedral is somewhat bare of tombs, and this just because of its exceeding sanctity. Thus the great Bishop William, its builder, refused to be laid in the Cathedral. "By no means," said he, as he lay dying, and heard plans being discussed for burying him within the church; "never has the body of anyone been brought even for an hour within the place where Saint Cuthbert's incorrupt body reposes, much less has any man been buried there." So he was laid in the beautiful Norman Chapter House, where all the other great Bishops and Abbots were laid, but we cannot find their tombs, for not very many years ago this matchless building, by some considered the most perfect portion of the Cathedral, was destroyed, not being sufficiently comfortable for the clergy to hold their meetings in.

As usual, we were fortunate in our guide to the Cathedral, who took us to the Chapel of the Nine Altars, where immediately behind the great

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THE NAVE

stone screen, that closes in the choir, is the high raised platform, upon which, before the sanctuary was wrecked at the Dissolution, stood the magnificent shrine that the grateful People of Saint Cuthbert had raised to their Patron's honour. We listened to the story of the opening of the tomb in 1899, at which our guide had himself been present. It was wonderful to stand there and hear from an eye-witness of the opening of the great coffin, for the Saint was a tall man, of the robes in which the skeleton still lay wrapped, and the head of the martyred King Oswald that lay between his hands. And on his breast was the little altar of silver, and the comb, and scissors, just as one reads in that very ancient history of Durham by the Monk Simeon.

Then lifting a door in the pavement he showed us how the mighty building was founded upon the solid rock, and being built of the same stone naturally wore well being in its own climate.

Passing into the Norman choir we heard of the statue of Our Lady of Boulton, which was made to open and shut in front, and had within it an image of Our Saviour, His hands raised, and between them a golden crucifix. It was this crucifix which on Good Friday was taken down and used for that most touching ceremony the Creeping to the Cross.

Our guide pointed out to us the marks in the pillars at the eastern end of the south aisle, where stood formerly the screen to which was attached the celebrated Black Rood of Scotland, captured

from the Scots at the Battle of Neville's Cross in 1346. It is said to have been of smoked silver with a portrait of Our Lady on one side, and Saint John on the other; a wondrous and mystical charm, with a wondrous and mystical history told by the monks of the Abbey of Holy Rood, concerning a huge elk, or some such beast, which appeared to the King of Scotland as he was hunting in the forest, and seemed about to attack him. I forget the story, but I think the King fainted, and when he came to himself found the talisman in his hand, and by its aid conquered his enemies. Until it was captured by the English it was kept in the Abbey Church of the Holy Rood at Edinburgh, and so gave the name to the royal palace which was built in the abbey grounds.

I have mentioned Saint Cuthbert's traditional objection to the presence of women within his precincts. They were not to be left, however, altogether without the consolations of religion, for as we retrace our steps down the nave, we shall notice as we approach the western end a line of dark blue marble, inserted in the pavement, and running from pillar to pillar. It is the barrier beyond which in ancient days women were not allowed to penetrate. But they could come thus far, and moreover they had a most beautiful chapel specially provided for them by Bishop Hugo de Puiset, or Bishop Pudsey as he was usually called. It lies immediately beyond the great west entrance of the Cathedral, its principal

altar blocking up the doorway, and it is one of the three existing Galilee Chapels of England.

The Bishop intended to build it at the end of the Norman apse, which in his day formed the eastern end of the Cathedral, and even began to do so. But he found that the foundations would not hold, Saint Cuthbert being no doubt unwilling to have a woman's chapel so near his own burial-place! So the rock was levelled up at the western end and the Galilee placed there.

It is one of the loveliest buildings imaginable. The contrast between the sombre magnificence of the nave, and this dainty elegant chapel is indescribable. It is as if the two buildings had been deliberately designed to represent the contrasting characteristics of man and woman. Bishop Hugo must have been a great artist as well as a man of means. Matthew Paris has not a good word to say for him, representing him as entirely taken up with the love of worldly glory. He certainly bought from Richard I., who was anxious to raise money for his Crusade, the Earldom of Northumberland, which amused the King into remarking as he handed him his sword, "I have made a young count out of an old bishop." Yet we can almost pardon Bishop Pudsey his love of money when we see what use he made of it. The lands of his earldom he gave to Saint Cuthbert, and his gold he lavished on the Cathedral and Castle. As I have said, we owe to him this perfect gem in which we are now standing, and which, through the centuries before

the Reformation, must have brought comfort and consolation to thousands of my poor despised sex! He also built the great Elvet Bridge and the city wall, and founded hospitals both at Durham and Northallerton. In fact I think that Bishop Pudsey was by no means as black as the chronicler, led on by Godric the Anchorite, painted him. Certainly he was an artist, for nothing more pure and beautiful can be conceived than this snow-white forest of pillars and sculptured arches. When of old, during Mass, the sunlight entered through richly painted glass, throwing warm gules on some young girl's fair breast—

> "As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon
> Rose bloom fell on her hands together prest,
> And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
> And on her hair a glory like a saint"—

it must indeed have been a scene for an Alma Tadema or a Burne Jones.

A bell had begun tolling as we stood spell-bound in this lovely place, and our patient guide, seeing that we had no mind to hasten, proposed to lock us in and leave us till after evensong, at which he had to assist. So there we found ourselves alone in this Chapel of Our Lady of Pity, this Galilee of the Gentiles, into which "even a woman might lawfully enter."

And first we went and stood beside the grave of the great Beda, that giant historian without whose labours we should know comparatively

nothing of the early history of any of these Cathedrals we have been visiting; Beda, the humble-minded monk of Jarrow, the good saint, who during his whole life seems to have had no wish or ambition, save that he might labour to leave the world more holy and less ignorant than he found it. The little boy, who at seven years of age was left an orphan, spent all his life in the monastery of Jarrow, under the guardianship of the great Saint Benedict Biscop. We hear of him as a tiny child, in a time of plague when all the monks save the Abbot and himself were sick or dead, helping to conduct the services in the Church, even singing the long psalms and responses in the accustomed manner. That was so like Beda, who said that he was sure the angels were present during all the services of the Church, and what would they think if they were not to find him there? Must they not say to one another: "Where is Beda? Why comes he not to the appointed services?"

We hear little of him as he grew older, for, as I say, he spent all his days in the cloister. But we have a beautiful and very graphic account of his death, given in a letter written by his disciple Cuthbert, who was with him at the end. He shows us the great Benedictine lying in his cell on Ascension Day, "in the shining of the morning." His breath has grown very short and laboured, but his mind is as clear as ever. The monks have gone in procession to the Church: only Cuthbert sits beside him. Beda has been trans-

lating the Gospel of Saint John, that his pupils may have a true version.

"Dearest Master," says the young man, "yet one chapter is wanting, but it would be troubling you to ask for more."

"No trouble," says the dying man, "mend your pen and write quickly, for I know not how long I shall last," and so they continue for awhile. And there is the pathetic scene a little later when he distributes his poor little treasures of incense and linen to his brethren. Toward the last he seems to have grown too weary to speak, and yet one sentence of the precious work is unwritten.

"Write it quickly," he says, and presently, when the boy tells him it is finished: "It is well," he gasps, "it is finished. Take my head in your hands, for I love to sit opposite my holy place in which I have been used to pray, and now will I call once more upon my Father."

They buried him at Jarrow, but later his bones were brought, none too honestly, I am afraid, to Durham, and laid at first in the coffin of Saint Cuthbert.

We were standing by the great plain tomb which now covers his bones, reading the well-known inscription: "Hac sunt in fossa Bedae venerabilis ossa," and thinking of the mysterious hand which added the last word but one and thus gave him his title Venerabilis, when the sound of singing reached us from the far-distant choir. It came so softened by its long journey down the

Norman nave that, save for the different character of the music, we could almost fancy we were listening to the monks chanting the psalms as of old, and even for a moment thought we caught an echo of the little Beda's childish treble singing to the angels. I have no time to take my readers to the cloisters, or to the chapter house such as it is since those fatal days when Wyatt was let loose upon the Cathedral. But we must certainly mount to the monks' dormitory, built at the end of the fourteenth century, by Bishop Walter Skirlawe, said by Leyland to have been the son of a sieve-maker, because on his Bishop's shield he bore six interlaced osier wands! It is in the dormitory and the adjoining refectory that we find stored those few marvellous treasures which have survived the days of the Reformation. Here we shall see the great stone cross which marked the grave of Acca, Bishop of Hexham, who died in 740, and other ancient sculptures. And there are vestments of great interest, a cope said to have been given to Durham by Queen Philippa after the Battle of Neville's Cross, as a mark of her gratitude to the great Cuthbert for his aid on that occasion. And there is another given by Charles I., representing David holding the head of Goliath, and others.

But most precious of all are the relics of Saint Cuthbert. They lie at the upper end of the vast hall, the remains of his wooden coffin in which he was brought from Lindisfarne. It is covered with inscribed carving of angels, archangels,

apostles, and at the head is represented Our Blessed Lady and her Divine Son, while on the remains of the lid one can still make out the forms of the four evangelists blessing the bed the Saint lay on. And in another case is the comb which was buried with him, and the scissors, both probably used in ancient times when the body was exhibited, and fragments of hair given as relics to favoured pilgrims: and perhaps most precious of all is the veritable little silver altar which Simeon of Durham says was laid upon the Saint's breast.

And when we come to the manuscripts what shall we say? For here are the four Gospels written, as a label informs us, "De manu Bedae," and a psalter also attributed to him. Think of looking at the very writing of Beda, and the coffin in which the monks laid the body of the blessed Cuthbert! It takes one's breath away indeed. I cannot tell of half the treasures which are to be found in the Cathedral Library of Durham. There are the rings of early bishops, even Beda's great gold ring. And though I cannot bear this habit of robbing the dead, yet it does bring one nearer to them to gaze upon their relics, and that is something in these days of unbelief.

Presently we stroll over to the Castle and visit the banquetting hall, with the portraits of kings who have been entertained there, and the fifteenth-century kitchen where the banquets were cooked, the ancient spits and modern cooking-stoves

standing amicably side by side, while the cooks are at work preparing dinner for the members of the University, who now inhabit this ancient home of the Bishops of Durham. The original Norman entrance has been enclosed by a broad loggia which makes the grim old place surprisingly comfortable. The rooms appropriated to the judges when they come to hold the assizes, though so ancient, are charming, the bedroom with its deepset window, the dinning-room, the little powdering closet. At last we begin descending a winding stone stair to find ourselves in the most ancient part of all the great building, the Norman chapel built in 1083, with the chancel step still in place, on which without doubt William the Norman knelt to receive Holy Communion when staying at Durham.

Next day was Sunday and very wet. We had intended to drive to Hexham, but it was impossible. So after we had been to church we sat by the fire; and when after lunch it cleared, we walked down to the riverside, and gazed up at the towering height of the Cathedral. Truly not even Lincoln can approach in majesty this seat of the Prince Bishops of Northumbria, those all-powerful successors of the Humble Scottish Shepherd-monk of Melrose.

VII

CHESTER

Our road to Chester led us through Doncaster, or the CITY ON THE DON, a river bordered here and there, as in Camden's time, by alders and other trees; and so to Rotherham, the birthplace of an archbishop of York, who founded in his native town a College and three schools for children, where they might learn reading, grammar, and music. Sheffield we skirted without much trouble, the "Smiths" of whom the old writers speak being no doubt at their dinners; and soon after we found ourselves passing Connisborough. Now it was at Connisborough in the year 487 that the Saxon chief Hengist took refuge, finding himself hotly pursued by Aurelius and Eldol the British Duke of Gloucester. Cær Conan they called the town in those days, and a strong fortress it must have been, seated upon its rock. But Hengist, having no wish to be caught like a rat in a trap, took up his position on the hill before the town, and so awaited the attack, which began immediately on the arrival of Aurelius and Eldol with their Britons.

We thought of Geoffrey of Monmouth's story as we ran past the town. How "on both sides

was great execution done, the groans of the dying causing a greater rage in those that survived." At last it was over, for a fresh detachment of British horse came up, the Saxons gave ground, the British pursued their advantage, and Aurelius cheering them on killed all the enemy that came in his way. But for Eldol the Duke, his one idea was to find Hengist; for he hated him with a deadly hatred, treacherous German brute that he was. "This one day should suffice for all the days of my life," cried the Duke, "if I could but get an opportunity to fight with Hengist." For he had not forgotten the time when the Saxon chief, having called an assembly to treat about peace, fell suddenly on the Britons who had come unarmed to the meeting, and murdered them all in cold blood, Eldol himself alone escaping. . . . And fight him he did, till "the fire sparkled with the clashing of their arms, and every stroke produced both thunder and lightning." And when it was over, and he saw his enemy safely bound and helpless, Eldol cried in a transport of joy: "God has given me my desire! The victory is in your hands, brave soldiers. Hengist is defeated, the day is your own!"

So Aurelius and his troops captured the city of Connisborough, and stayed there three days to bury their dead and relieve their wounded, and an assembly was held to decide upon the fate of Hengist. Then Eldad, the Bishop of Gloucester, and brother of Eldol, said: "Though all should

be for setting him at liberty yet would I slay him. For when the Prophet Samuel had King Agag in his power, he hewed him in pieces before the Lord. Do thou therefore likewise to Hengist, oh my brother, who is a second Agag."

And Eldol took his sword, and, drawing the Saxon out of the city, cut off his head. But Aurelius, always courteous even to his foes, commanded him to be buried, and a heap of earth to be raised over his body according to the custom of the Pagans.

We had no time to pause at Connisborough, though I should have liked to see whether anything remains of the mound of Hengist. It is however very unlikely that any traces of the battle have survived the many centuries which have elapsed since then, though I suppose somewhere below the soil the bones of British and Saxon soldiers still lie mingled, as the bodies of their English and German descendants lie to-day beneath the new battlefields in France and Belgium.

Presently we came to Castleton, given with its fortress by Edward III. to his son John, Duke of Lancaster; and so found ourselves in that wild region which "rising high, and peaking up with hills and mountains," has come to be known as the Peak District.

Years ago, long before the days of motors, we had driven through this country in a homely dogcart. It was early spring I remember, and

very cold, and the owner of the cart had wrapped up our knees in a brown cow skin, and a funny pair I dare say we looked. But it happened to be our honeymoon, and everything was a wonder and delight. We visited the Peak cavern of course, and found the floor of the cave still coated with the slimy mud the little river, swollen with winter rains, had spread over it. I remember I fell, and nearly rolled into the stream, making my new dress in a terrible state.

A very mysterious and ghostly place is this Cavern of the Peak, full of shadows and the moving forms of ropemakers, who, in the semi-darkness, look like great brown spiders walking slowly up and down, spinning the webs of destiny for those who pass in and out of the cave. Further along in the depths of the mountain are vast chambers, and narrow passages, leading, or so says Gervaise of Tilbury, to a very wide and large country, with rivers and brooks. But I think the shepherd who he says told him this was making game of him, at all events we saw no such land.

High up on the hill above the cave stands the ruined castle, once the home of Peveril of the Peak, the friend and terror of our childhood. And presently we come to Buxton, or Buxton Well, as it used to be called, with its nine fountains of hot waters, " wholesome for the stomach, sinewes, and whole body." But we have no time to pause at Buxton if we would reach Chester before dark, though as we pass the handsome Pump House

our thoughts go back to poor Mary Queen of Scots and her farewell to the city :—

> "Buxton that of great name shalt be
> For hote and holsome baine,
> Farewell, for I perhaps shall not
> Thee ever see again."

Then on by way of Congleton and Holmes Chapel we hasten to Middle-wich, one of the three famous salt pits, or WICHES of the neighbourhood, the others being Nantwich and Northwich. Here we notice some very old houses and begin to feel that we are nearing Chester, and indeed it is not long before we find ourselves in the crowd and bustle of that ancient city.

If you love old Camden, and who does not, you will probably remember on page 604 of the 1636 folio edition the following information respecting the origin of the city of Chester or West-Chester as he calls it. "There be some who avouch it to be, as they say, of greater antiquitie than the moon, as founded forsooth by Leon Vaur the Giant." But Ranulphus the monk, in his chronicle, declares it to have been founded by the Romans, and first fortified by King Marius, a British monarch, who, as we are told by Geoffrey of Monmouth, led an army from Chester against Roderick, King of the Picts, who came ravaging the north of Britain. Him he slew, and in memory of the victory set up a stone called after himself Westmarland.

But we need not go back so far as Leon Vaur

the Giant, for it is not the city with its wonderful old walls and ancient houses, and the picturesque *rowes* or covered walking places, which thread the town "so that a man may go dry from one end to the other," we have come to visit, nor even the old Norman castle, built by William the Conqueror, in the vast hall of which the Courts Palatine and the Assizes were held twice a year. No, it is to the Cathedral we must make our way, and a curious old place it is, with a curious and rather confusing old history, which in its beginning has to do with a certain Princess called Werburgh, a niece of Saint Audrey of Ely, and daughter of Wulfere, King of the Mercians. For, during our journey from Durham to Chester, we have passed from the great kingdom of Northumbria into that of Mercia, where quite a different history awaits us. The Lady Werburgh, who from her childhood had consecrated her life to religion, had, on the death of her father, retired from court, and with her widowed mother had taken up her abode in the convent of her Aunt Audrey at Ely. After the deaths of Saint Audrey and her sister Sexburga, Werburgh for a time, being much beloved, was persuaded to fill the post of Abbess at this convent, but later, at the request of her uncle, King Ethelred, who had succeeded to the kingship of Mercia, she quitted East Anglia, and went to preside over two new convents he had founded at Trentham and Hanbury. It was at Trentham she died, but according to her expressed wish, was buried at Hanbury,

and soon became celebrated for her miracles of healing. The town, however, was not fortified, and those were the days when the savage Danes were ravaging the land. So in the year 875, during a specially murderous outbreak of these pagans, the people of Hanbury, hearing that the enemy had advanced to within five miles of their town, took up the body of their Saint and carried it to Chester, as the monk Bradshaw says :—

"The Holy goost inspired theyr mynde
To take the shryne with great humilite,
And bring it to Chestre from perill and enmyte,
. . . . . .
Where her body shulde rest and worshipped be
Magnified with miracles next to Our Ladye."

When the clergy and citizens heard of the coming of this royal Saint they arranged a great procession—

"With crosses and banners and serges clere light"—

and the bells were tolled, and priests gathered from far and near in their finest copes—

"With censours of silver to encense her body right."

And next to the clergy came the Lords of the shire, the knights, the barons, all—Praying the Trinite

"Which sent them this great treasure to keep them from danger."

And there were nuns sitting with lilies in their hands, and holy widows and wives all magnifying this great virgin :

" Synginge Te Deum to the King of Blysse."

The ancient writer even gives us the words of the Song of Welcome which the people of Chester sang that day, more than a thousand years ago :—

" Welcome sweet princess, king's daughter dear,
Welcome fair creature and Rose of Mercians,
. . . . . .
Welcome sweet patroness to Chester city."

Then through the town they passed with joy and great gladness. And this scene took place in the reign of King Alfred, who in his joy and fervour divided his riches into four parts ; bestowing one upon the poor, giving another to the cause of religion, the third he devoted to the better education of his subjects, and the fourth he used for the building of churches. And his time he divided into three parts, eight hours for reading and prayer, eight to be occupied with business, and eight for the ruling of his realm. (Upon what he lived, and when he slept, is not recorded.)

Now there was in Chester a very ancient church dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Paul. It had been founded in the middle of the second century by King Lucius, grandson of Marius, the slayer of Roderick, King of the Picts. This Lucius having heard rumours of the new religion which had been brought to Britain in the early

part of the first century by Roman soldiers and slaves, but had since all but disappeared, sent messengers to Rome asking Pope Eleutherius to provide missionaries to instruct himself in the doctrines of Christianity, and to convert his people. Therefore the Pope sent over two priests, and Chester being one of the first places to receive the Faith, it was there that one of the very early churches was built and dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Paul. It was known as the Mother Church, where, as Henry Bradshaw tells us, "the faith was preached unbrokenly, like as the faith of Peter never failed at Rome."

So it was in this very ancient and sacred building, this MOTHER CHURCH, around which, for seven hundred years, the people of Chester had buried their dead, that St. Werburgh's body was laid. It was guarded by a small body of Saxon secular clergy, and soon became the centre of a great Pilgrimage. And Ethelfleda, the Lady of Mercia, daughter of King Alfred, and sister of the reigning King of Mercia, having a great devotion to Saint Werburgh, built a stately minster over her relics, joining it to the old church which was newly dedicated to the Holy Trinity and Saint Oswald. It is this Church of Saint Oswald which to-day forms part of the south transept of the present Cathedral of Chester.

The church which contained the body of Saint Werburgh was very rich, for it was but natural that the building should be made worthy of the great Saint who had come to dwell among

and protect the citizens of Chester. And the chronicler relates how as time went on—

> "The people with devotion, and mind fervent,
> Gave divers ornaments unto this place,
> Some gave a cope, and some a vestment,
> Some other a chalice, and some a corporace,
> Many albes and other clothes offered there was,
> Some crosses of gold, some books, some bells,
> The poor folk gave surges, torches, and towels."

And there were rich jewels given to the shrine, and gold and silver and money and land. And all this took place in the latter half of the ninth century, and forms the beginning of the story of the Cathedral of Chester.

As for the Lady Ethelfleda, she was not content only to house her treasure, but surrounded the town where it lay with walls, and protected it by a strong castle. And Saint Werburgh herself was not insensible to the attentions which had been showered upon her, for she saved Chester from the Welsh who came against it, led by a King called Griffin. That was a terrible siege, for the enemy had gathered in vast numbers. But in their extremity the people of Saint Werburgh cried to their protectrice for aid, and the clergy, taking up the shrine in which her body lay, carried it in procession to the walls, and laid it there in full view of King Griffin and his army. Then a Welshman, full of contempt for what he no doubt considered a superstition, cast a stone at the reliquary, and injured it "piteously."

Such an insult was not to be endured by this daughter of kings, meek nun though she had been. The man had scarcely dropped his hand, when Griffin and his whole army were smitten with blindness, while he who had damaged the shrine was seized by a "spirit of darkness" and expired on the spot. There are many other such stories showing the care with which this royal Saint watched over her people. Harold, King of the Danes, arrived one day, with Malcolm, King of Scotland, before the North gate. But the Canons again brought out the ancient relics, setting them on the summit of the gateway, and once more the town was saved.

As the years pass we hear of Saxon kings visiting Chester; how King Edgar came to the "City of Legions" where eight tributary kings met to pay him homage; and how they went up the River Dee in the royal barge, the eight kings rowing, and Edgar "keeping the storne as most principall." A very great king was this Edgar, and known as the Protector of Commerce. Three fleets he had, each of twelve hundred and sixty vessels. One he kept on the east coast, one on the north, and one on the west. About May he would start out with the eastern fleet, to examine all the coast with its forts and harbours, until he reached the northern vessels. He then sent back the first fleet to its post, continuing his progress with the second; and so in like manner he travelled with the western ships. In winter he would pass through the length and breadth of

his kingdom, enquiring into the condition of his subjects, and where necessary sheltering the poor from the rich and powerful. He was not much more than sixteen when he began this laborious life, and it is hardly surprising that he died at the age of thirty-three. He is one of the great heroes of Chester, and when I was there as a little child it was of King Edgar my father told me, so that I can never look down on the River Dee but I seem to see the young monarch steering his royal barge, while the eight tributary kings row him up to the Church of Saint John, where he is to receive their homage.

Another great personage connected with Chester was Leofric, father of Hereward the Wake. By that time the Church of Saint Werburgh was badly in need of repair, and it was this Earl and his wife Godiva who paid for the rebuilding.

And so we come to the days of William the Conqueror, when Chester, like the rest of England, underwent many changes. It was just after William's awful progress through Yorkshire, when the whole country beyond the Humber was left desolate, and more than a hundred thousand innocent persons, chiefly women, children, and aged persons, were left in midwinter to die of hunger; for the Normans had not only robbed the country, but destroyed what they could not carry away. It is somewhat satisfactory to know that the army suffered grievously on their further march, so much so that the King, who to his credit be it said, fared, when on the march, much as his

soldiers did, was forced to go on foot and to feed like the rest on the dead bodies of their horses. At last he arrived with the remnant of his army before the walls of Chester. After subduing it, in his usual summary manner, he rebuilt the castle, in which he placed a garrison and plenty of provisions, and put it into the charge of his nephew, Hugh Lupus of Avranches, whom he created Earl of Chester. To him and his heirs he gave all this country, says Camden, "To be holden as freely by his sword as the King himself held England by his crown."

This sword, given to Hugh Lupus and his successors, was no mere figure of speech, as we may see by the following lines of an historian poet :—

> "The king gave to him for his inheritance
> The County of Chester with its appurtenance,
> By victory to win the aforesaid earlidome
> Freely to govern it as by conquest right ;
> Made a sure charter to him and his succession
> By the *Sword of Dignity* to hold it with might. . . ."

In Hemingway's "History of Chester" he tells us that this Sword of Dignity is now in the British Museum, and that it measures four feet in length, is so heavy that it takes a strong man both his hands to brandish it, that it has a two-edged blade, and beneath the hilt, which is decorated with pearls, it bears the inscription: "Hugo Comes Cestria." It was this first Norman Earl of Chester who rebuilt the old Abbey Church of

Saint Werburgh, turning out the very unsatisfactory secular priests, and substituting a community of Benedictine monks to watch over the sacred body of the ancient Abbess, and to minister to the needs of the many pilgrims who came to visit her shrine. In this work the Earl spared no pains, for he lived in the days when, as Camden says: "Christendom roused herself, and casting away her old habiliments did put on everywhere the bright and white robe of churches." His abbey and church completed, Hugh Lupus brought over from Normandy his friend, that most holy of saints, Anselm, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, in order to complete the reformation of this monastery of Saint Werburgh. And when all was accomplished the Earl caused himself to be clothed in the habit of a monk (and it must have been an ample one, for he was so fat that it is said he could no longer move about), and having made over all his possessions to his handsome young son Richard, the old Earl died, and was buried in the Abbey he had re-founded. This Richard, son of the old Earl, it may be interesting to note, was drowned in the celebrated White Ship with his young wife, Adela, and Prince William, the son of Henry I.

The first Bishop of Mercia who really resided at Chester was the Norman Peter, who made the city his Episcopal seat in 1075. In doing this he was probably influenced by the decision of the Council of London, which had recently directed that all bishops' seats should be removed to forti-

fied cities. So for ten or eleven years Chester was a Cathedral town, and the Church of Saint John the Baptist, which Bishop Peter began rebuilding, was used as the Cathedral; while the Church of Saint Werburgh continued to serve as that of the great Benedictine Abbey.

The next Bishop of Mercia, Robert de Limesey, removed the seat to Coventry, perhaps tempted by the splendid abbey newly erected there by Earl Leofric and the Lady Godiva. And after that Chester had no Cathedral, though it remained of course under the rule of the Bishops of Mercia.

It would be very fascinating to study the history of the city itself, for there are many interesting stories connected with it. For instance an old legend tells how Harold, escaping from the Battle of Senlac, made his way, wounded and half blind as he was, to Chester, and there lived for years in a cell near Saint John's Church. Henry I. is reported to have met him there, and to have talked with him. Harold's wife Algitha, too, is said to have lived at Chester. And there was that mysterious anchorite who dwelt near the Church of Saint John passing under the name of Godescallus, but who all the time was believed by the people of Chester to have been Henry IV., Emperor of Germany. People did strange things in those days in what they believed to be the cause of religion, but on the other hand people were just as credulous as now to believe any romantic rumour.

We have no time to do more than notice here

and there some event which marked the passing of the years that followed. There was the visit of King Edward I. in 1282, who spent the month of June in Chester, and no doubt witnessed the celebrated Midsummer Show, for which the town was noted, when four great giants, unicorn, dromedary, camel, dragon, hobby horses, and sixteen naked boys went frolicking through the city in unseemly procession. Perhaps he enjoyed himself in the rude fashion of those times, for the following year, after his victory over the Welsh, he returned to Chester with his Queen, and on Saint Augustine's Day the royal pair attended Mass in the Church of Saint Werburgh, at the altar of which they presented a cloth "of great value."

In 1312 his unworthy son, Edward II., hastened to Chester to meet his more unworthy friend, Piers Gavestone, then on his way back from his sojourn in Ireland, where he had been reigning with the magnificence of a prince.

And we shall see Edward the Black Prince arriving with an armed force to quell some disturbance among the citizens, and later his poor feeble son Richard II., who had always loved and trusted the people of Chester, arriving from the Castle of Flint with his fellow-prisoner the Earl of Salisbury, each seated on a "sorry little nagge not worth forty franks, to be confined in the dolorous castille."

Here, too, in 1445 we shall see Queen Margaret of Anjou arriving with many great Lords and

Ladies, all being very graciously received by the Mayor and citizens, the Queen "winning all hearts by her courtesy and hospitality."

Henry VII. came to Chester in 1493 with his wife and mother, and we may be sure that all these great folk, who have left their mark upon history, for good or for ill, visited the Shrine of Saint Werburgh, and attended Mass in that most ancient church, which was so shortly to become the Cathedral of Chester. For in the reign of this same Henry's son, in 1536, all the religious houses in Chester were suppressed, and chief among them the great and ancient Benedictine monastery founded by Hugh Lupus and Saint Anselm.

Four years later the church was rededicated to Christ and the Blessed Virgin, and became the Cathedral of Chester, John Bird, once the Provincial of the Carmelites, who for two years had acted as Bishop of Bangor, being consecrated to the See. He seems to have been a sort of Vicar of Bray, so well did he make his beliefs tally with whichever religious party was in the ascendant, and in this manner succeeded in living very comfortably to the age of eighty-one.

And this brings us after a short interval to the terrible days of the great siege, when Chester held out so gallantly for King Charles I. and suffered such unspeakable horrors. An old writer has given a most graphic account of those days, when "at the bursting of the grenade the houses in Watergate Street skipp joint from

joint, creating an earthquake, while the main posts jostle each other, and the frighted casements fly for fear."

The Cathedral itself is a beautiful old place, though not perhaps so striking as the other mighty churches we have been visiting. The Early English choir in particular is very fine, with its dark, richly sculptured fifteenth-century stalls, and containing as it does the remains of the once magnificent Shrine of Saint Werburgh. Beyond the altar can be caught a distant view of the Lady Chapel with its painted vault and the five tall lights of the eastern window glowing with all the colours of the rainbow. It was in this beautiful building that poor George Marsh was condemned as a heretic by Bishop Coates. But we must not linger any longer at Chester, fascinating old city as it is. For on our way home we have still to pause at Lichfield, and Lichfield has such an early origin and is withal so beautiful even in these modern days, that we must save some little time to visit it.

VIII

LICHFIELD

Our journey after leaving Chester led us past Whitchurch, the ancient home of the Talbot family. Here, in the church dedicated to Saint Alkmond, there is an inscription begging passers-by to pray for the soul of that noble lord Sir John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, who, with his younger son, fought so victoriously in France until the coming of the Maid. My readers will certainly remember this fifteenth-century Bogey Man of the French children, who, when naughty, were told by their mothers that if they did not behave better they would be fetched away by Milord Talbot. He was captured at Orleans, but afterwards exchanged for a French lord and an immense ransom.

After Whitchurch the road becomes more hilly, but broad and good until we reach Stone, the place, according to a local tradition, where King Wulphere the Mercian found his two sons praying, and murdered them for becoming Christians.

After that we run through villages and little towns till presently we find ourselves approaching the last of our Northern Cathedrals, Lichfield.

I have a curious old road book called "Britannia Depicta," which gives a fine little engraving of the arms of the city of Lichfield. There, on an escutcheon, may be seen a tiny landscape, a hill with two trees on its summit, and a church with three spires. In the foreground are lying three human bodies, dead and mutilated, and this escutcheon is supposed to tell the story of the foundation of Lichfield or Campus Cadaverum as was its Latin name.

For about the year A.D. 303 there began as we know the great persecution of Christians under the Emperor Diocletian. Those were the days when our first great martyr Alban received his crown. You remember the beautiful story, no doubt; how the young man, while still a pagan, had given shelter to a Christian priest named Amphibalus, by whom he was converted. Hearing that his teacher was being sought for, Alban, having donned the priest's cassock, allowed himself to be arrested, and suffered in his place. That is, of course, the well-known story of Saint Alban. But the persecution did not cease with Alban's death, and those converts of Amphibalus who were not killed, had to fly. They took the northern road, still called Watling Street, till they reached the spot where to-day stands the beautiful Cathedral of Lichfield.

There it was that the Roman soldiers overtook them, and slaughtered them without mercy, their bodies to the number of a thousand being left unburied; so that the field of the martyrdom

came to be known as the lich field, the field of corpses, from the Saxon word Lich, which means a corpse.

About three and a half centuries later, King Oswy of Northumbria having conquered and slain Penda, King of Mercia, established a bishopric at Lichfield, and built, for the first Bishop Dwina, a church dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Mary. Dwina and his immediate successors were Scotsmen, and I think that is about all that we know of them; but it seems right that, as we come in view of the magnificent west front of the present Cathedral, we should for a moment try to call up a picture of the rude Scottish Bishops, who in those primitive days ministered to the inhabitants of the little low-lying village, which was the beginning of the present city.

Some years later, about 669, there arrived at Lichfield another Bishop, the humble and holy Chad. We should know almost nothing of this good man save for the pages of Beda. He had been Abbot of Lastingham, and for a while Archbishop of York, where he had made himself much beloved by his charity to the poor. But his appointment to the See having been successfully disputed by the great Saint Wilfrid, he was appointed by Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, to rule over the diocese of Mercia. He made his headquarters at Lichfield, but he raised no Bishop's Palace, this humble man, but lived the life of a hermit, in a little cell which he built on

the piece of ground known as Christian Field, the traditional place of martyrdom of those early Christians of whom I have spoken. Here he taught the disciples who came to him, and gained the love and respect of all by his purity, austerity, and humility. One day as he was sitting meditating on the portion of scripture which he had been reading, he heard the sound of a horn, and into the cell ran the little white doe who daily supplied him with milk. She was quickly followed by a young huntsman, who seeing the Bishop stopped short, asking pardon for his intrusion, and so the acquaintance began. Now Chad, it is said, lost no opportunity of speaking of the religion which was to him the very light of life; and on this occasion, finding that the youth was no less a person than the son of Wulfere, King of Mercia (whose old rhymed story we found at Peterborough), he certainly had no mind to depart from his usual custom.

The young Prince was quickly converted, and shortly returned, bringing with him his brother, and the two were baptized in the little stream which ran past the hermitage. But whether it was here that their furious pagan father found and murdered them, or at Stone, as my old road book says, I must confess that I have no real knowledge. In the "History and Antiquities of Lichfield," Thomas Harwood relates, as part of the story, that finding the distance too great between their home and Lichfield to allow of their going constantly to receive the instruction of

their beloved master, the youths " prevailed upon Saint Chad to move to a spot more convenient for them to perform their devotions together." Possibly that spot may have been Stone: or the young men may have been discovered in the cell at Stowe by their enraged father, and escaping have been overtaken and murdered at Stone: or Stone may be a misprint for Stowe. But that Saint Chad had an oratory and cell beside a lake at Stowe, which now forms a suburb of Lichfield, is a generally received and well-authenticated tradition.

Like Saint Aidan, whom he took as his model, Saint Chad used to travel about his huge diocese on foot, accompanied by his clergy, as he had done when he was at York. And as they went they read the scriptures, chanted the psalms, or meditated on the Passion of Our Lord, or some other holy subject. Anyone they met the Bishop would stop, and in his gentle way instruct in the doctrines of the Christian Church. And for the poor he always had alms, for the gifts he received from his rich converts he immediately passed on to the needy, of whom there were always plenty in those terrible days, when war and pestilence made such havoc among the population. And so this good man became known throughout the length and breadth of his diocese, always ready for the work he loved, and always on foot, till one day Archbishop Theodore, arriving on a visit, found him, I suppose, dusty and exhausted after one of his long tramps, and ordered him to

ride for the future, even we are told lifting the reluctant Chad into the saddle.

It is said that Saint Chad died of a pestilence which was ravaging the low-lying country where he had his cell. No doubt he, and his little band of followers, had been visiting the stricken people, and on their journeyings may have slept in infected houses. While he lay sick his faithful attendant Ovin, whose cross we found at Ely, heard flocks of angels singing over the Bishop's cell; and, as further evidence of his holiness, after his death the very dust taken from his tomb cured men and beasts, while madmen who spent a night upon his grave were forthwith restored to their right minds.

In olden times Lichfield had two monasteries, each of course with its church. There was Saint Chad's in the east of the city, the district now called Stowe, where as I have said the Saint prayed, and preached, and had his oratory, while the church in the west was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. As for the Cathedral, unfortunately the records of this most beautiful building were so destroyed by the Puritans during the three great sieges which the church underwent, that its history is vague and imperfect. It is supposed, however, that a certain Robert de Lymesey built the first Norman Cathedral at Lichfield about the year 1200, erecting it probably on the site of the two earlier Saxon buildings.

It is of the death of this Robert de Lymesey,

that Matthew Paris gives so vivid and terrible a description. He was a very avaricious man, and for his own ends had robbed and persecuted the poor monks of Coventry, turning them out of their monastery, and leaving them homeless and destitute, so that almost all of them perished from want. When he realized that his own end was near, and that he had only a few more hours to live, his terrors of the punishments which he believed awaited him in the other world knew no bounds. His clergy were powerless to comfort him, for they knew well what his character had been. So there he lay raving, and weeping, and begging them to appoint him a penance, the more severe the better, that he might die with some hope of forgiveness. But the horror of the sins he had been confessing so overwhelmed his hearers that they remained speechless. At last one found courage to suggest that the Bishop should be clothed in the habit of one of the monks he had so cruelly injured, and express himself willing to remain in Purgatory till the day of Judgment, if thereafter his evil deeds might be pardoned. It is a strange and awful picture this which the old monkish chronicler has left.

Quite a different character was Bishop Burghill the Dominican, who made himself so beloved and respected that, on the day of his enthronement, he was met at the west door of the Cathedral by the clergy of the surrounding country, all walking on bare feet to express their respect for his holiness. For many years, on the anniversary

of his death, money was distributed to the poor of the city, in memory of this good and well-loved Bishop.

And there was Rowland Lee who married Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn, and Ralph Bayne who assisted at the burial of Queen Mary, but refused to administer Holy Communion to Queen Elizabeth. A bold man must Bishop Ralph have been!

In the middle of the seventeenth century we come upon those days when Englishmen divided themselves into two camps, Royalist and Roundhead, and brother fought and killed brother. It was then that the Cathedral of Lichfield was turned into a fortress and sustained three separate sieges on behalf of King Charles. The story of those days seems incredible as we look at the peaceful Close and lovely Cathedral of to-day. The Puritans, led by Lord Brooke, commenced the first siege on the day of Saint Chad, and, on his way to the scene of action, this commander knelt and offered up a prayer, that God would by some special token manifest his approbation of their designs. He had scarcely spoken, when a deaf and dumb man, called Dumb Dyott, shot him dead from the central spire of the Cathedral. Next day the spire itself fell, and much of the roof: for the Puritans did all that lay in their power to ruin and desecrate this beautiful house of God. As soon as they gained possession of it they began hunting cats with hounds every day through the aisles and choir.

They pulled down the ancient woodwork, broke the lovely windows, and tore up the pavement. Then the graves were opened and rifled. In fact no German army of occupation could have behaved much worse than these so-called Puritans. They even took the Royalist families whom they found in the neighbourhood, and set them in front of the firing-line that they might be shot down by their own friends in the Close. The struggle ceased at length; but for twenty years the Cathedral remained a ruin.

In the year 1661 the new Bishop, Dr Hackett, arrived to find his Cathedral an absolute wreck. But he was a man not to be easily discouraged, and, the very day after his coming, he roused his servants as soon as it was light, and together with them began the work of removing the rubbish.

And so gradually the beautiful place arose from its ruins. The Ladies of the Vale, as the three spires are called, once more kept watch over the Country of Saint Chad, and statues were placed in the niches left empty by the guns of the Puritans.

There can be no doubt that Lichfield is one of the fairest of our English Cathedrals. There is its colour, rose red, beautiful beyond words of mine to describe, especially when the evening sun casts its last beams upon the west front with its matchless portals. There is something almost unnaturally beautiful about the whole building, more like an immense delicately stained ivory carving than a construction of stone. It is so

rich, so light, so finished in every detail. And the interior is hardly less striking, with the wondrous Lady Chapel, built by Bishop Langton, to contain the body of Saint Chad. But the splendid shrine has long since disappeared, and only the old manuscript, commonly known as the Gospels of Saint Chad, remains to remind us of the saintly Bishop. The glorious windows of sixteenth-century glass were brought from a desecrated Flemish monastery by Sir Brooke Bouthby.

One of the most celebrated persons whom we should remember at Lichfield is Doctor Samuel Johnson, the author of the great dictionary. He was the son of a certain Michael Johnson, a bookseller of the city. His father and mother were elderly when they married, and the boy was from his babyhood a precocious wonder child. Almost from his birth he suffered from scrofula, and was taken by his mother to London to be touched by Queen Anne for the King's Evil, as the complaint was called. We shall see the old house in the market-place where he was born, and where he learned his collect each Sunday so quickly. We may even catch a glimpse of the poor ungainly child running after his mother crying, "I know it! I know it!" In the market-place we shall think of the quarrel he had with his father, when the latter asked him to keep his bookstall for him one day; and again, of a worn, ugly, elderly man standing many years later on the site of the stall, in the pouring rain, doing penance for his disobedience. The Cathedral will remind us

of him, carried on his father's shoulder to hear the preaching of some celebrated divine.

Poor Johnson, it was so very, very sad for him to have been born with so repulsive an exterior, for he had many excellent qualities, though I doubt whether some of us would have discovered them beneath his rude and almost brutal personality. Even his manner of eating was revolting, for during those many years while he was making his way to the front as a literary man, he was continually in a state of semi-starvation, so that later it was his custom to fall upon his food like a wild animal. It was during these years of poverty that he made his strange marriage with the widow Porter, whose children were older than Johnson himself. "My Titty!" he called the fat, vulgar, empty-headed old woman, whose over-painted cheeks his semi-blindness prevented his seeing. To her death he believed her a beauty, and would speak of her to his friends as "My pretty creature!"

And there was little Fanny Burney to whom he was so kind. How she trembled at the thought of meeting the great man, and what friends they became. She was even one of the few faithful admirers who were present during his last sad hours. All through his life Johnson suffered from a morbid horror of death. Yet when the end came he was peacefully happy, and passed away on Monday the thirteenth of December, 1784.

And so with Lichfield we reach the end of our northern journey. It has taken us far, not only

in distance, but in time. For these great monuments of the past lead our thoughts back through the ages, not only to the days of their foundation, but to those earlier times when the news of the Gospel was brought to our far western land by Roman slaves and soldiers, followers of Severus and Constantine. Beside the gorgeous temples of their masters they reared their humble chapels, where they worshipped the despised and crucified young Jew of Nazareth, who was soon to be adored as Lord of both emperor and slave.